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THE POPE:

A NOVEL.

BY
AN OLD AUTHOR,

IN A NEW WALK.

"I speak not of men's creeds: they rest between
Man and his Maker."—BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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P R E F A C E.

“ We speak not of men’s creeds: they rest between
Man and his Maker.”

SUCH is our motto. We think the pages of a novel unsuited to polemical discussions. We could not, indeed, have introduced any into the following narrative which would have afforded interest to the English Reader: for the period to which it refers is anterior to the Reformation in England. Luther had but just commenced teaching in Germany. The few sentences, in which his doctrines are alluded to, are,

necessarily, in conformity with the known sentiments of the speakers.

Having given a list of our principal *Dramatis Personæ*, we need not add that the ground-work of our narrative is strictly historical. Yet have we striven not to encroach upon the province of the regular historian : we have not recorded any public event which did not influence our final catastrophe. A novel is, or ought to be, essentially a work of entertainment. It cannot be made a royal road to knowledge. But may it not be so based upon recorded facts as to allure many who object to the trivialities of the merely fashionable novel, and to enable those who read solely for entertainment to renew the memory of important historical events without finding those events check their pursuit after entertainment ? In reviewing a recent publication,

The Times newspaper has expressed our view of the matter in language which we are glad to quote:—"The main object of art," says the reviewer, "is to please, not to convey instruction, moral, historical or of any other kind. If instruction can be conveyed without impediment to the main design, if a certain course of historical events chance to fall in so pleasing an order that the artist cannot do better than take them up as they are, well and good; but these are merely the chances, not the essentials of art." We have endeavoured to select an epoch in which these "chances" should be abundantly offered to us. If we have failed, it can be from no lack of historical materials: for we have most daringly involved ourselves in what Shelley calls "the episodes of that cyclic poem written by time upon the memories of men."

One word more as to the character of our chief Personage, Clement VII :—we had endeavoured to pourtray it such as the history of the times represents it to us : and the recent publication in English of Ranke's talented history has given us the very satisfactory assurance that the sources from which we had drawn our impressions had, in no single instance, misled us ; had, in no single instance, induced us to represent the Pontiff in colours different from those in which he is revealed to the minute and searching enquiries of the historian.

June 13, 1840.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS INTRODUCED.

CLEMENT VII, reigning Pontiff.

FRANCIS I, King of France.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

FERDINAND D'AVALOS, MARQUIS OF PESCARA.

VITTORIA, daughter of COLONNA, his wife.

HILDA COLONNA, her friend.

THE CHEVALIER BAYARD.

SIR MAURICE TILTON, Envoy of Cardinal Wolsey

WARREN DE WHITTINGHAM, his friend.

ANSELMO, a crazy hermit.

MONINNA STELLA, a Roman girl.

RAFFAELLE MONZA, a trooper.

DON DOMENICO DE MASSIMI, a rich miser.

GIULIETTA, GEACINTA, FRANCESCO, his children.

COLONEL MALDONATO, a Spanish Condottierre.

BARONE DELLO SGUARDO, a noble bandit.

SCHOMBERG, <i>Archbishop</i> of Capua,	} Counsellors of
GIBERTO, <i>Bishop</i> of Verona.	

BENVENUTO CELLINI.

MICHAEL-ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

GIULIO ROMANO. CORREGGIO.

VIDA. BEMBO. SADOLETI.

FRA GIOVANNI, a lay brother.

CHARLES DE LANOIE, Viceroy of Naples.

MORONE, Chancellor of Milan.

CARDINALS CAMPEGGIO, FARNESE, ORSINI, &c.



THE POPE

CHAPTER I.

[THE PILGRIMS

Ave Maria ! blessed be the hour

The time, the clime, the spot were I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power

Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,

Or the faint dying day hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirr'd with prayer.

BYRON.

“ BLESSED be God for having made so beautiful a prospect ! I tell thee, Maurice,” said a young pilgrim to his companion as they lightly bounded, from rock to rock, adown one of the rugged paths which, stretching from the valley of Aoust towards the East, was, at that time, one of the most frequented

tracks across the now-macadamised Alps—
“I tell thee, Maurice, that I envy thee thy
ten years’ seniority of me, for that they have
enabled thee often to visit before now this
magnificent country.”

“Nay, Warren; this is but my third journey
to Italy. But I confess that I am not sorry
that our bluff King Harry knows his own
mind so little that the Cardinal is obliged to
send me once more on a secret mission. That,
however, must be a secret, even to thee: not
but that I believe a man of eighteen to be
quite as deserving of confidence as one of
thirty:—he is innocent of the wicked ways
of us men of honour and of the world.”

“Halt, halt, Maurice Tilton;” exclaimed
Warren de Whittingham as they turned round
an advancing buttress of the mountain. “A
truce to argument. Let mine eyes drink in
this glorious scene!”

Glorious, indeed, was the scene spread out
before the young men, as they seated them-
selves on a ledge of rock to admire! Who

nas not paused in rapture as the view of the Borrommean lake and islands first opened before him ! Behind our travellers, all was bleak, cold, and barren : before them, almost beneath their feet, verdant shores enclosed a lake of crystal, whose waters glistened in the setting sun as they reflected the leaf-tufted islets which dotted, in the distance, their smiling surface. Many a fisherman's skiff spread its white sail to the evening breeze, as it bounded to its island home. Many a labourer toiled, with his cream-coloured steer and his lumbering wain, over the vine-covered hills of the undulating shore. The evening bell faintly tolled from the tower in the Fisherman's Island, and summoned all to doff their bonnets and repeat the " Angelus " prayer. The scarcely audible notes of a bugle, which had ascended, at times, from the Isola Bella, were silenced at the sound. The lofty turret of the parish church of Arona loudly echoed back the summons which the Fisherman's Island had first given. The belfry

of the embattled castle clanged forth the appeal ; and many an embowered church on the banks of the Ticino river prolonged the strain. Further and further, faintly and more faint did it arise from the many churches that studded the vast plain of Arona ; till the air seemed to have become vocal with the summons to prayer and the gentle breathings of cheerful thousands, who, pausing in their several employments, repeated, during a few moments, the same supplication.

Our two pilgrims stood up, and joined in the prayer of the christian world.

Again the sound of the bugle arose : again Warren de Whittingham uplifted his head. The clash of arms was heard at no great distance.

“ This way, Tilton,” he cried ; “ down in that ravine ! ” and he bounded away.

“ If we are to turn aside,” muttered Tilton, “ to join in every brawl within ear-shot, good coats of mail would have stood us in better stead than these pilgrim weeds. However, he

will soon tire of such knight errantry in Italy."

Thus consoling himself, Maurice Tilton slowly followed his less calculating companion.

In a sheltered lane, worn deep between overhanging banks, he soon came upon the party the noise of whose contest had struck upon his ear. A third pilgrim—in those days, not only were real pilgrims frequent, but the garb was often assumed by travellers who wished to pass unquestioned and unnoticed—a third pilgrim was defending himself, with a short rapier, the use of which was then general amongst the gentry of France, from the attack of five soldiers clad in steel caps and iron back and breast pieces, who, with battle-axe and dagger, pressed hard upon him. The pilgrim stood with his shoulders to the overhanging bank; and wielded his weapon with a grace, dexterity, and dignity which Tilton had rarely seen equalled. One of the assailants fell at that moment, pierced through

the body : and de Whittingham was closing with a second. It needed no further glance to call forth all Maurice Tilton's exertions : he sped forwards, uplifting, as he went, his pilgrim frock, and drawing forth a rapier like that used by the other two. This time, however, there was no occasion to employ it : the ruffians, seeing a further addition to the unexpected aid which their intended victim had already received, speedily drew off from the conflict. One alone remained, writhing on de Whittingham's sword ; to look after whom his three fellows paused at a little distance.

" He has got his supper," said one. " He'll never live long enough to tell who was his pay-master : so let us make off for more help."

So saying, and uttering some gross Spanish oath, these three disappointed worthies retired up the ravine.

" Never, Signor," said Tilton to the stranger, " never was better demonstrated the superiority which, in the hands of you

Italians, the rapier possesses over every other arm. I can scarcely judge how even your skill could make it defend your person against these five banditti."

"I am, sometimes, Seigneur," answered the pilgrim, sheathing a dagger in his belt, "put to such straits that I do not entirely trust to my rapier, like this noble youth; noble I am sure he is, from the ardour with which he hastened to my assistance, and from his bearing in the fray."

As de Wittingham made a shy, it might be mistaken for a reserved, bow, "Young gentleman," continued the stranger, "you have saved my life; even in the land to which we are both journeying, and which, I think, is foreign to us both, it may not be out of my power to testify to you my gratitude otherwise than in words. My coat of steel links, which this rent in my petticoat," jerking aside his robe, "has betrayed, would not have long protected me against those assassins without your assistance. You have served me."

He paused awhile to arrange the folds of his dress, so as to conceal the shirt of mail, visible through the rent. "Messires," he continued, to the two Englishmen, "I need not represent to you that it is my wish to be thought a pilgrim only. I may trust to you to respect my wish. Now, however, as by assisting me you have exposed yourselves to other vengeance than you wot of, it would be as well did we proceed forwards, in company, to seek a lodging for the night. I am a stranger in this country; and, as a holy pilgrim," he added, with a gay, but supercilious smile, "I would prefer to lodge in holy precincts. Know you of any monastery or convent in this neighbourhood? and, if it possess the right of sanctuary, it may be the better for us all."

"You foretel to us hidden dangers of the cause of which we are unable to judge," replied Tilton. "My friend here would rather prefer to encounter them, I know; but as this garb is not assumed by us, any more than by

yourself, Seigneur, without cause, I am unwilling that the disguise should be torn off before mine own time. I have been in this country before, and think I can undertake to guide you."

"Thanks, sir," responded the stranger. "Pray what may be the strong fortress in the valley beneath us?"

"That is the castle of Arona. There we might, indeed, remain safe, if its owner has managed to keep it through these varying wars. Count Gilbert of Borromeo is a good and skilful man, and has managed to preserve a neutrality and the favour of both the emperor and the king of France. Yet am I inclined to your opinion, that a convent will afford us a better lodging; and an hour's brisk walking will bring us to a rich Benedictine abbey, which is held by a worthy priest of the same noble family. We will bear, if you please, to the right, so as to avoid the vicinity of the castle, and the more frequented level country."

“To the right, be it,” said the stranger: “you add, fair Sirs, to my obligations received from you.”

Thus saying, did the party, in which we have interested ourselves, wend their way amongst the hills, avoiding the then impregnable castle of Arona, and the rock on which now rises the most colossal statue in Europe;—reared by a grateful people to record the humble virtues of the son of him who now ruled in the lordly fortress, and held wide dominion over the surrounding district, and the lovely lakes.* The moon shone out in the clear, but deepening sky, as our travellers skirted the shores of the lake of Orta; and while they press forward, engaged in such courteous, but restrained, converse as might pass, in those troubled times, amongst persons unknown to one another, and who admitted that they were travelling under false characters, we will take the opportunity of describ-

* The statue of St. Charles Borromeo, at Arona, is 112 feet high, including the pedestal, and of beautiful proportions.

ing to our readers the appearance of the several individuals of the group, for each of whom we hope to have bespoken his willing interest.

The figure of each was concealed by the frock of the pilgrim, of black serge, surmounted by the tippet covered with scollop shells. In the hand of each, was the usual walking staff, at the top of which was suspended the small gourd provided to contain the supply of water often needed in warm and arid climates, but which we may suppose our pretended pilgrims to have filled with some more generous liquor, ere they had undertaken the passage of the Great Saint Bernard.

The staff in the hand of the stranger, whose language declared him to be a Frenchman, was so much curtailed of its usual proportions as to assume the appearance of a stout walking-stick, which might serve, in case of need, for attack or defence. The appearance, and still more the manners, of this stranger excited intense curiosity, and

even interest, in the breast of Warren de Whittingham. But a few years older than himself, unknown, and avowedly in fear of his life, what was it that, in this stranger, repressed and overawed the elastic spirits of the English youth? Nothing could be more graceful than his manner, more courteous than his speech; and yet both his speech and manner assumed and asserted a superiority which the other voluntarily acknowledged, while he marvelled at himself for doing so. The stranger was indebted to him for his life; this tie alone ought naturally to have established, at least for the moment, an equality of feeling between them; whereas the manner of the other appeared to convey the assurance that the Englishman was as fortunate in having rescued him, as he himself was in having been rescued. And, in spite of himself, de Whittingham acknowledged, in his own breast, a similar feeling.

These internal struggles in the mind of

the young Englishman were the natural workings of his truthful, his buoyant, and yet his shy, character. His elastic step, the bearing of his slim and graceful form, but, above all, the steady thoughtfulness of his sunken eye, betrayed an innate consciousness of his own powers of mind and of body ; this was, however, tempered by a pallid cheek, by a suggestive manner of expressing himself, which is graceful, at all times, in youth ; and by the dropping of his dark eye-lashes, whenever the person whom he addressed gazed fully upon his features. No man of superior mind, who has mixed in any degree with the world, can be ignorant of his own superiority : he may regret that he has not the brilliant wit of one, the conversational powers of another ; but he cannot be insensible to the elevation which mind gives him over matter. That de Whittingham felt this mental elevation was evident : he admitted to himself a belief that the stranger possessed it also : yet his

attempts to overcome his own nervous timidity not being equal or sustained, could only assume the appearance of forwardness battling with shyness and reserve. He had, in short, a manner which is often natural to Englishmen, and which is often acquired by those who move in a circle in which their just pretensions are either unknown or unadmitted, while circumstances prevent them from steadily asserting their claims to consideration.

Maurice Tilton understood not or felt not any of these sensations. An active man of the world, in a spirit-stirring age, of an old and wealthy family, he felt no inferiority to those into whose society he was generally thrown: he had established a character for ability and diplomatic discretion beyond his years: the mental inferiority of others, he had often the sweet satisfaction of testing; if he chanced to meet with mental superiority, which, we will do him the justice to say, was not often the case, he was

too well pleased with himself to acknowledge the master mind, and generally characterised it as being that of a dreamer or an enthusiast. He saw, at once, that, in the French pilgrim, he had fallen in with a gentleman of birth and habits equal, if not superior, to his own: but it was not his wish to throw off his present disguise, and to assert himself to be other than he appeared. He, therefore, cheerfully submitted to the condescending courtesy of the stranger, and entered, with apparent freedom, into whatever subject of conversation the circumstances of the walk might call forth.

“By lodging to-night amongst these hills,” observed Tilton, “we shall defer, at least for one day, all probability of catching the plague which rumour says now rages in Milan.”

“So I have heard,” replied the Frenchman: “I cannot, however, admit that I have much fear on that score. My various pilgrimages, we are all pilgrims, gentlemen, have led me into so many similar dangers that I am

inclined to adopt the faith of the Turk, who is said to be the best mediciner in all cases of plague."

"His medicine consists, I have heard," said de Whittingham, "in shunning all forethought and anticipation of evil, leaving the event to God. How sad that his faith cannot be better directed!"

"Aye," asserted the stranger: "the holy fathers have long preached a crusade against the Turks, though not exactly one of missionaries; but they, as well as other European sovereigns, generally are too much engaged in good offices towards one another to attend to more distant calls. So as we will not go to Mahomet, Mahomet is moving towards us by rapid strides through Hungary."

"Know you," said Tilton, who was diplomatist enough to wish to turn the conversation from all questions of national policy, "know you the origin of the plague which now infects Milan?"

"Doubtless, the temperature of the air, and

the pre-disposition of the inhabitants, have occasioned it ;” evasively replied the stranger.

“The Milanese must have imported it with the plunder of the French camp ;” interposed de Whittingham. “Biograssa, we heard from a stranger this morning, is now taken, and the French are retreating from Italy on every side. You, sir, I fear, will scarcely be safe, even in that disguise,” he added, with a look of interest, to the stranger.

The stranger turned sharply upon him a glance in which haughtiness mingled with kindness and gratitude. De Whittingham’s eyes fell.

“Though I do not own to more than thirty,” again interposed Tilton, “I believe I am the oldest of our party ; and I am not sorry to see there the turret of the abbey glistening in the moonbeams. A walk from the top of St. Barnard is enough to try my old limbs.”

Through the branchy chesnut trees which crowned the side of the ravine down which our travellers were journeying, and whose spring foliage was yet too young to afford an effectual

screen, a lofty turret was now seen to spring from a large mass of buildings that crowned the precipitous cliff. They passed along the face of this wooded precipice, and soon came to a wide bridle path, which led them upwards, through stunted brush wood and jutting rocks rising amongst them: they stood upon the grassy summit of a hill which sloped away on all sides, covered with cultivated fields and wide-spreading garden walls. A massive and extensive building crowned its summit. A plain flight of steps led up to the wide doors, which were closed on account of the lateness of the hour—for it was now eight o'clock.

The stranger pilgrim advanced first up these steps: then, drawing back with remembered courtesy, said to Tilton,

“Chevalier, you have been our successful guide to this abbey. Let me be indebted to you still further for an introduction within its hallowed walls.”

They all ascended the steps: and the pull

which Tilton gave at an iron chain which swung beside the door, was answered by a deep-toned bell that resounded in an interior court.

CHAPTER II.

THE RENCONTRE.

Sceglieronne una, e sceglierolla tale
 Che superato avrà l' invidia in modo
 Che nessun' altra potrà avere a male
 Se l' altre taccio, e se lei sola lodo.
 Quest' una ha, non pur sè fatta immortale,
 Col dolce stil, di che il miglior non odo,
 Ma può qualunque di cui parli o scriva
 Trar del sepolcro e far ch' eterno viva.
 Vittoria è'l nome.

ARIOSTO.

MAURICE TILTON'S pull at the rusty chain at the door of the abbey was answered, in due time, by a lay brother, who opened a little door, about eight inches square, which was framed at the height of his own face in the main gates ; and who, peering out through the iron bars that were closely interlaced across it, enquired who rang the bell at that late hour.

"Pilgrims, padre," answered Tilton ; "poor pilgrims who have been beset by banditti, and

who pray for a night's lodging and sanctuary."

"Banditti do not often attack *poor* pilgrims," retorted the porter; "and I am no padre, but simply Fra Giovanni. However, as there are only three of ye, there can be no great danger in admitting ye."

Thussaying, Fra Giovanni unbolted a wicket, wide enough to admit one person at a time, and which, as is usual in all foreign carriage gates, was cut in the main doors. He counted the three pilgrims as they crossed the threshold; and having, as he thought, carefully rebolted the wicket, conducted them to the little room adjoining, which served him for a porter's lodge.

As, by the light of the upright three branched lamp, he there surveyed the applicants, a marked change came over his manner and announced itself in his altered tones.

"Excuse, Signori," he said, "excuse me that I kept you waiting at the gate: but in these troubled times, I have made it a rule never to admit any applicant after the

gates have been once closed for the night, until I have once repeated to myself the ‘Pater noster,’ that I may be directed how to act. What with the Switzers, the French, the Germans, the Spaniards, and the Italians, who quarrel with one another for the remains of this poor country, it requires superhuman intelligence to guide a poor lay brother in his most simple avocations. And now, Signori, without doubt, you will wish to be warmed and refreshed?—I thank God and St. Gratiniano that I see no evidence of wounds to be tended!”

“You might have seen plenty of them, good brother,” answered the French pilgrim, had it not been for the prowess of this gentle pilgrim, who saved your holy fathers the trouble of burying my corpse, which some neighbours of yours wished to inflict upon them. However, we will now willingly go to your hospitable hall within the *Clausura*.” *

* The *Clausura* is the enclosure or boundary beyond which no monk or nun can pass, save on particular occasions; and within which no person of a different sex is ever admitted.

“ Within the Clausura it must needs be, Monsignore,” answered the porter, doing homage to the dignified bearing of the pilgrim, “ for all our principal apartments in the strangers’ quarter are now occupied by a noble lady and her followers, who have taken refuge here from the plague which now devastates the city of Milan, and the conflicting armies which render all fortresses unsafe. Thank God, there are few who would be hardy enough to molest the Abbot of San Gratiniano, who may rely upon the veneration of the whole district—not to mention the power of his brother, the Count Gilbert of Borrommeo.”

Thus speaking, and with evident pride in his monastery, his abbot, and his worldly patron, the old porter led the way, across an extensive court, to an arch-way that opened under a pile of buildings which enclosed the yard on the right-hand side. This arch-way was lighted up by a heavy iron lamp; and Fra Giovanni was expla-

ing to his guests that, as this was the quarter for strangers, and as they wished to be admitted within the Clausura, they must tarry awhile until he summoned another porter to lead them into the interior courtyard, whose high wall rose in front of them, when an elderly man, dressed in a garb somewhat partaking of that of a soldier, a clerk, and chamberlain in a noble family, crossed the arch-way, and paused to consider the group. A stout leathern jerkin, fastened in front, closed tightly around his throat, affording good protection against any but a direct thrust; over this, a furred doublet, of the richest brocaded satin, was cast with dignified negligence, and drawn around him as a protection against the evening air. On his head was a plain black circular, globular cap, very like an inverted porringer, and which, descending lower behind than it did in front, sheltered the nape of his neck, and covered and warmed his ears. A gold-hilted dagger was stuck in his broad leathern belt.

When the intelligent, but somewhat heavy and rotund features of this imposing personage had been, for some time, directed towards our travellers, they suddenly lighted up with surprise and pleasure; then, darting towards Tilton, he exclaimed, in mingled Italian and French, "Milordo Maurizio Tiltone! how delighted I am to have the honour of the surprise of receiving you again in Italy! Would that I could now do to you the honours of the palace at Milan!"

"Don Ferdinando, the Marquis of Pescara, is, I presume, with the army," replied Tilton. "We have all heard of his progress. How came you here, Major-domo? Where is Donna Vittoria?"

"The Signora Marchesa is in this very house, Don Maurizio, and will be rejoiced to see a friend of former times; La Signorina Hilda is with her," he shrewdly added. "Permit me to have the honour of conducting you to the hall in which she is even now sitting down to supper with the Abbot."

Tilton gazed hesitatingly on his friends. "Take them in with you, Signor Tilton. The Marchesa will be glad to see any friend of one whom her husband esteems so highly. I heard old Fra Giovanni muttering something about *clausura* and sanctuary; I hope there is no cause for either," added the old man, with a look of concern. "But even if there should be, no one would presume to intrude on the privacy of the Marchesa."

Tilton turned towards the French pilgrim, in doubt whether he ought to introduce one, of whose quality he was ignorant, although he fully believed him to be well-born, into the society of the first woman, in every respect, who adorned that age. The Frenchman saw his hesitation, and dissipated it, although he increased his curiosity, by calmly saying, "I can have no objection. Every one must be proud to enjoy the society of Vittoria Colonna."

As the old Major-domo left them, to announce their approach to his mistress, de

Whittingham hurriedly whispered to Tilton, "Who is she? Tell me before we enter."

"Who?" answered Tilton. "Is it possible you are ignorant? She is an angel. The daughter of the commander, Fabrizio Colonna—betrothed to her husband when both were infants—grew up, endowed with every grace, every accomplishment, every talent: both passionately fond of one another:—she is the first poet of the day: pious, sincere, thoughtful; and, above all, adoring her husband; so mind what you are about; for whether other Italian women do or do not justify your English opinions of them, this one, most assuredly, does not."

The old major-domo returned, followed by a dignified clergyman, whose dress, and the plain gold cross suspended round his neck, showed him to be the Abbot Giulio Borromeo.

"Seigneurs," he courteously said, "I rejoice that this Abbey is favoured by your visit; and that one of you will find an old

friend, who is impatient to meet you again—Permit me to lead you into the hall.”

Taking Tilton’s hand in both his, he kindly led him forward. The other two followed.

The room which they entered was an eating-hall of handsome proportions : the ceiling and walls of which were painted a *fresco*, in the glowing and classical style which Michael’ Angelo had just introduced. Huge logs of wood blazed upon an ample hearth, and several lamps lighted up a table on which vegetables, fruits, pastry and glasses were elegantly arranged. Small notice, however, were these able to attract from our pilgrims ; for from the top of the table arose a lady, who, coming forward with gracefulness, held out her hand to Tilton, exclaiming,

“ Welcome, Don Maurizio, again to Italy. I rejoice that you have been discovered and brought to me, in spite of your masquerade.”

“ Bella Vittoria,” replied Tilton, bending over the hand which, with Italian devotion, he raised to his lips, “ no disguise, no falsehood,

could exist a moment in the presence of so much truth, beauty, and candour."

"I am delighted to see that you have not lost any of your politeness during your absence. But now introduce your friends to me ; for I do not remember to have had the pleasure of seeing them before."

"Those who have once been blessed by the sight of the Marchesa di Pescara," said the Frenchman coming forwards, "can never forget the honour they have enjoyed. I, however, Madam, am only a pilgrim, bound upon a pilgrimage, with no name save that of a pilgrim."

"We do not wish, Sir, to intrude upon your privacy," replied the Marchioness. "In these times, heaven knows that a man can scarcely tell who is a friend and who a foe. But be assured that, having been received into the temporary abode of Vittoria Colonna, you shall be perfectly safe while you abide under the same roof."

"Lady, I am grateful," replied the French-

man. "Yet, though unknown myself, permit me to present to your notice this noble youth, the companion of your friend. To his gallantry I owe my life. It is fitting that I should be the first to publish his merit."

"A friend of yours is he, Don Maurice?" enquired the lady. "You, I think, won your spurs from the Marquis of Pescara, ere he was taken prisoner at the battle of Ravenna, and when you were a mere boy. To judge from the bearing of your friend, and the testimony of this gentleman, this pilgrim I mean, it will not be long ere, by some noble action, he acquire as full a right to his—unless, indeed, he have already achieved them?"

"Had he shown the same spirit in a stricken field," interposed the Frenchman, "as he exhibited in my private cause, I myself should not have hesitated—"

He paused, conscious that he was betraying more respecting himself than he had intended. The Marchioness did not appear to notice his embarrassment, but exclaimed,

“Chevalier Tilton, have you not discovered your old friend? But no; I am glad to see that you are not so remiss,” she added, as she perceived that he was conversing with a fair girl beside the supper table. “Do you, Sir,” she continued, turning to de Whittingham, “do you, whose merit, but not whose name, I have been able to learn, do you and this good pilgrim return with me to the board. You must need refreshment after your wanderings.”

She extended her hand to that of de Whittingham, who reverently, but timidly, and as one not used to female society, conducted her to her seat.

And, during this short walk, how felt de Whittingham?—for many sensations may be crowded into as short a space. Had Tilton spoken to him of Vittoria Colonna as of any other woman, his words would have produced little impression; had he not spoken of her at all, he might have been, indeed, dazzled by her beauty, but he would have

met her as the wife of another man ; and his own principles were too high to have allowed him to form a thought beyond. But when he heard Maurice Tilton, who seldom praised any one except before his face or when he anticipated that his words would be repeated, speak in those rapturous terms of the woman they were about to meet ; when he heard him pourtray a character, such as the enthusiastic imaginings of his solitary hours had often pictured to him, but which he had never believed really to exist ; when, above all, he heard him caution him not to fall in love with her ; thus forcing upon the mind of one as yet only accustomed to a retired country existence that it was possible for him to do so—he certainly allowed his imagination to be so awakened that it could ill withstand the appearance of the splendid woman who had so graciously received him. Nothing is so likely to make a man fall in love as telling him not to do so.

Warren de Whittingham was not weak

enough to have done any thing so foolish. He merely acknowledged to himself his admiration of Vittoria Colonna: he wished that he might become better acquainted with her. He thought that their tastes and their minds were congenial; perhaps he even wished that she were not married; but beyond this, he thought, he felt, he dreamed not.

“And now, young gentleman,” said the Marchesa of Pescara to de Whittingham, as she seated him beside her at table, “Now as the Chevalier Tilton is all engrossed with his old friend, my dear Hilda, and as the pilgrim, as he calls himself (though my woman’s eye has discovered a coat of mail through that rent in his scallop-shell cape), is talking the history of the campaign with the good Abbot, and could not, even were he less pleasingly occupied than he appears to be, give us any account either of himself or of you, you must excuse my curiosity; and as you are the friend of an old friend of mine and Don Ferdinand’s, and I hope will be better ac-

quainted with us yourself ere long, you must allow me to apply at the fountain head, and to ask you yourself, at once, who are you, and why are you come to Italy in a disguise which neither you nor your friend appear very anxious to maintain?"

We have said that de Whittingham was unused to female society, even in England; still less was he prepared for the familiarity and apparent earnestness of Italian women. Instead of replying playfully to the half-serious, half-playful curiosity of the Marchesa, he felt himself unable to parry her enquiries, and thought that a display of frankness and sincerity was the only means of extricating himself from his imagined difficulty, and might lead to that better acquaintance between them to which she alluded, and which he was so anxious to bring about.

"Alas! Signora," he therefore gravely replied, "I scarcely know who I am, and am scarcely allowed to use the name I bear. My father, is, indeed, a man of family, fortune

and great eminence : his residence in England is not far from that of my friend. But that father has never looked upon me as a son : never since I was a child have I been permitted to approach him. My mother, I am told, was an Italian, although even that is doubtful ; and my dark hair and complexion," he more playfully added, "seems to be as strong a proof of the fact as any I can learn."

"An Italian !" exclaimed Donna Vittoria, "you have established at once a community of feelings and of country between us ; and I cannot now let you off from one single event in your strange history. Is your mother living ?"

"I fear not."

"What could induce your father to behave so to his child ?"

"My father and mother," he replied, "lived most happily together for the first year or two after their marriage. She had presented him with twins—myself and a sister. My father, as is often the case, bestowed most of his

affection upon the little girl, of whom he was doatingly fond. One night, the household was awakened by the glare of flames, which had broken out in the main body of the hall. All was confusion. My father left his wife and servants to remove the family, while he directed the workmen in their endeavours to subdue the flames. All was attempted in vain: the hall was soon a heap of ruins. When he rejoined my mother, what was his horror, on discovering that, in her eagerness to save herself, she had forgotten her infants!* He reproached her: he struck her: he drove her from his sight, and from his home. I was soon after brought in by a peasant. My father eagerly enquired for his daughter: it could not be found. Enraged, rather than grieved, he refused to receive me: swore that he never would acknowledge or see again either me or his wife. I was carried from his house, and am indebted to the father

* That a similar instance of selfishness recently occurred, is well known.

of my friend Tilton, and to him himself, for whatever advantages and education I have enjoyed. My father has kept his word, and I have never yet been permitted to approach him. He seems never to have forgiven me that I did not die instead of my sister."

"And your mother?" enquired the Marchesa.

"She has ever been considered to have died. It was not likely that her Italian spirit—pardon me, Signora Marchesa—should endure such treatment; and I fear the worst."

"'Tis a strange tale," thoughtfully observed the lady. "I would not speak lightly of it; but my friend Ludovico Ariosto has written not any more curious. You have interested me much in your welfare. May I ask what are your present plans?"

"My youth, lady, was spent in the acquisition of all martial accomplishments. I may also have other tastes; but they will not serve me in the world, and I must carve my way with my sword."

"My friend," interposed Tilton, "notwith-

standing his name, which in our outlandish language implies scholarship; and notwithstanding that his family crest represents a hand holding an open book, has heard that Italy was the cock-pit of Europe, and would not rest till I had enabled him to take his part in the sport."

"Sport it is not, Tilton," replied the youth, "and war will never be so considered by me. But these contests must soon have an end; and there is then hope of a crusade against the Turk."

"Would that peace were concluded!" murmured Hilda. "The Marquis never passes a month without being in some engagement; and dear Donna Vittoria lives in perpetual fear."

"But without such occasions to call forth their charming talents," interposed the Abbot, "we should neither be delighted by the Marchesa's beautiful stanzas, nor by Don Ferdinand's poetic dialogue on Love, which he addressed to her from his imprisonment, after

the field of Ravenna. However, Signorina Hilda, I sincerely participate in your prayer for peace, and hope our noble visitors, and you ladies, will join us, and quaff a goblet to the same holy wish."

"Joyfully!" exclaimed Vittoria; and the word was timidly echoed by Hilda, as she raised the spiced wine to her ruby lips.

No contrast could be greater than that which was offered by the frank self-possession and dignified manner of the Marchioness to the retiring timidity of her friend. In the carriage of the former, there was nothing bold, nothing obtrusive; it was that of a perfect lady, aware that she occupied, and always had occupied, the first place in society; and that she had only to act in the manner which was natural to her station and character.

In person, she was tall; but so perfectly formed that none would have remarked her as being above the usual height of women. Never were feet or hands more finely formed than hers. Her small head, well poised upon her

slender neck, was generally thrown rather back, so as to draw up and exhibit her Juno-like bust in its fair proportions. Those small regular features would have been scarcely remarked had it not been for the full black eye, standing out beneath its straight eyebrow and its silken lashes, which immediately drew attention to its melting and varying lustre. And when attention was once attracted to that peerless face, who could withdraw from the study which it ever exhibited to such as could read the living soul through its speaking tabernacle? How faded the lustre from her pale olive cheek when Hilda alluded to the dangers to which her husband was exposed! How quickly returned that crimson glow, as the Abbot called for the pledge of peace! The inward mind was seen through every feature: and fair as those features would have been, even had no celestial spark enlightened them, what must they have been when illumined by the soul of Vittoria Colonna!

How different from all this was Hilda! Of

exquisite proportions, but below the middle size ; she appeared timidly to shrink into herself when exposed to the glance of a stranger. Her complexion of the fairest roseate hue, her hair of the very palest flaxen shade, her eyes of the deepest blue, her lips of the most deep-dyed carnation, were not, indeed, impassible to the emotions of her mind ; no, they beamed forth, or were clouded with every feeling that agitated her. But her feelings, her sympathies alone acted upon them. Without being incapable of the noble thoughts and brilliant aspirations which constantly flitted through the mind of her friend, Hilda exerted not her mental powers upon them. That which was beautiful she admired ; that which was painful distressed her. In a word, her countenance glowed responsive to her feelings : that of Vittoria Colonna was the index of her feelings and of her thoughts also.

Scarcely had the cup been quaffed, and the wish for peace been uttered by the now united company, when a loud knocking was heard

to mingle with the sound of the bell at the front gate of the convent. It had continued for some moments, when Fra Giovanni, the porter, regardless of decorum, rushed into the hall, exclaiming "Dio mio! Dio mio! what is to be done? I looked through the wicket, and a blow with a battle axe was aimed at me. They will break in the gate. Ahi mi, there it goes! I must have left it unbolted when I let in these noble gentlemen. Dio mio, have mercy on us! Santa Maria! pray for us!"

The cause of the noise, and of Fra Giovanni's dismay, we must explain in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE SURPRISE.

Frère Jaques ! Frère Jaques !
Dormez vous ? Dormez vous ?
Sonnez les matines,
Sonnez les matines :
Ding—dong—bell !
Ding—dong—bell !—OLD GLEE.

Oh, gran bontà dei cavallieri antichi !

ARIOSTO.

WHILE the conversations which we have related were passing within the hall of the monastery, how beautifully tranquil was the scene without its walls ! The season was the end of April. The air was warm and balmy, though braced by the vicinity of the eternal snows of the Alps. The moon, nearly at her full, rode triumphant through a sky of the deepest purple. So bright was her

nightingales, as they nestled amongst the young leaves of the forest, and the tolling of a distant convent bell as it pealed out the hour of evening prayer. Occasionally, indeed, the boom of a single cannon, or the distant report of musketry would break upon the stillness of the evening and proclaim that man was, as usual, intent upon marring the peace and the loveliness of that world which a beneficent Providence had assigned to him for very different purposes.

A whisper was heard amongst the copse-wood in the bridle path, up which our travellers had ascended to the abbey.

“Art sure, Raffaëlle,” murmured the voice, “art sure that they came up this road?”

“Sure enough, Colonel: for after the strangers had beaten us off from the Frenchman, I light that the glimmer of the stars was almost quenched in its splendour. The white peaks of the Alps stood sharply out from the unfathomable back ground. Not a sound was heard save the occasional notes of the

followed in their track and marked them obtain admission into the monastery."

"Thou didst well; 'twas only I that was to blame in not setting more of ye upon him, so as to make sure of him. However, we cannot miss him now."

"But, Senhor Colonello," replied the trooper, "I scruple much about attacking any one that has taken sanctuary."

"Bestia che sei!" replied the Colonel; "plague not me with thy scruples; but call up the other men, and remember the reward."

"Aye; but we know that he is coming to join our own party; how then can we attack him?"

"How can we refuse the reward which the Queen Regent of France offers for his apprehension? It need not be known that *we* have delivered him up."

"La scusi, Senhor, as these Italians say," replied the trooper; "but I do not like the job:—and this attack upon a convent too—"

"Fellow," insisted the Colonel, angrily, "I

have argued with you too long ; you presume upon past services of the kind. Call up the men instantly."

" I do, Colonel, presume upon past services to refuse to act a part any longer in such. When I attacked him this morning, I had not learned who he was. I have served under him, and conquered under him before now," doggedly insisted Raffaele.

" Morte di Dios, traitor ; you serve under me now and shall obey me, or it will be the worse for you. Call up the men."

" To commit treachery and sacrilege, I will not. I would rather put the good Fathers on their guard. They tended my wounds last year, after our attack on Milan."

" Let them tend that, an their art reach so far ;" swore the Colonel, striking him with his dagger. " Think not I will allow a caitiff like thee to talk of thwarting the plans of Colonel Maldonato !"

Now, though the point of the Spanish Colonel's dagger glanced off from the collar-

bone of Raffaele Monza, yet was he knocked down by the violence with which the hilt and the steel glove of the assassin smote against his chest. Though somewhat stunned by his fall, he had yet judgment enough left to lie still, and thus escape from the further vengeance of his commander.

Having accomplished this doughty deed, the Spaniard descended the hill some fifty yards, and presently appeared again on the platform with twenty dismounted troopers at his back: they had, in fact, tied their horses to the trees in the adjoining wood.

On the platform of the hill all was clear; the moon shone brightly on every side, and shewed no chance of interruption to whatever might be the design of the party. Not a moving object chequered the glistening landscape.

Emboldened by this prospect of security, the Colonel moved steadily up to the gate of the monastery, and gently pulled the porter's bell.

Now it so chanced that, after Fra Giovanni had resigned the pilgrims to the care of the major-domo, who had announced their arrival to the abbot, he had lingered in the passage till the return of that worthy functionary; and, not anticipating any other call at the gate so late in the evening, he had promised to himself an hour's pleasant conversation with the great lady's great man.

“*Mi rallegra con lei Signor Bartolomeo,*” he began, “I rejoice that I was the means of introducing to you an old acquaintance.”

“*You* the means!” retorted the major-domo. “However, if you have anything to say, come into my room, for your mountain air is not cheering at this time of night.”

He tightened his furred cloak round his chin and walked away. Although the invitation was none of the most gracious, so anxious was the poor porter for a chat, that he eagerly caught at it, and humbly followed the well-poised steps of the other, as he stalked before him into a little room opening

upon the passage, and in which a fire brightly blazed, glinting upon the glasses and bottle which stood on a neatly set-out little supper table before it. In a recess, at the further end, was a small bed, with heavy green fustian curtains.

"The night is, indeed, chilly," humbly observed Fra Giovanni; "and I thank your Excellency for having invited me into your apartment."

"I did not invite you," muttered Signor Bartolomeo; he was, however, soothed by the title which the diplomatic lay-brother had applied to him, and with less rudeness added, "Since you *are* here, sit down and take a draught of wine."

"Thank your Excellency; as I am only a lay-brother, I am not called upon to fast; those vows would never suit me."

"Nor me either," said the major-domo, putting a large steak of stewed chevreuil on his plate.

"It must be a great delight to you," in-

sinuated Fra Giovanni, like a skilful general, approaching warily to the point on which he proposed to open the attack ; “ It must be a great delight to you to see so many of the great people of the world with whom you become acquainted ; and some of whom you fall in with again, wherever you go. Now I dare affirm that Signor Tiltone is a great man, notwithstanding his scallop-shells and staff.”

“ I suspect, though, the Frenchman is a greater than he,” replied the major-duomo. “ Monsignor Tilton is, however, an eminent personage, I assure thee.”

“ I doubt it not,” said the porter, “ and I envied you the pleasure he exhibited to see you again.”

“ Why, yes,” replied Don Bartolomeo, now fully yielding to his naturally gossiping disposition, which we must do him the justice to say he generally repressed, although he now showed himself no match for the wily lay brother, whose situation of porter made it part of his duty to worm out the secrets of all

who came within his domain : “ Why, yes, the Chevalier Tilton was naturally glad to see me. He has been often and much at our house in former times.”

“ He was on the personal staff of the Marquis, was he not ?” interrogated Fra Giovanni, at a venture.

“ Something like it. While his father was living, he served as a volunteer with the Marquis ; but since his father’s death, he has retired from the army, and I suspect has great influence in his own country as an ambassador, or agent to foreign Courts. I’ll bet my gold hilted dagger against an ebony rosary that he is now come to Italy on some such errand.”

“ Then he has had enough of military glory,” said the porter : “ I fancied that, when the Abbot led him into the *sala*, his first look was not bent, as it should have been, on the Signora Marchesa, but on that white-faced little girl who has accompanied her.”

“ Signor Fra Giovanni,” said the major-

duomo, with assumed dignity, "what business hast thou to note such matters? Recollect that thou art half a monk."

"The dress does not make the monk," said the porter jocosely; "I am only a lay-brother; but she is a beautiful little girl—a sister, I suppose, to the Marchesa."

"Then thou supposest quite wrong; which only proves how absurd it is for such as thee to form any supposition respecting noble families. Now I will tell thee—but no; I will not."

"Nay, Signor Bartolomeo," said the porter, "remember that I have not the opportunities, nor the talent of your Excellency to discover the quality and conditions of persons from their outward garb; nay, in despite of it, as you showed, this evening, in the case of these pilgrims."

"Well, as thou admittedst thy inferiority, I have no objection to tell thee that none of us, unless it be the Marchesa herself, know any more of this matter than thou. I remem-

ber me, indeed, although they all please to fancy that I have forgotten all about it, I remember a wild looking.....”

But if Bartolomeo chose to commit a gross breach of the secrecy which he owed to his patron’s family, we cannot deem ourselves justified in repeating and perpetuating his treachery. Let us rather seek to excuse him by declaring that he soon perceived and repented him of his fault, as was testified by the sudden burst of anger with which he interrupted himself, exclaiming,

“But *bestia ch ’io sono!* to tell all this to thee! Say thou didst not understand a word of it; swear!”

“Nay, but, Don Bartolomeo—”

“Swear, I tell thee,” cried the major duomo, catching hold of his collar, and drawing his golden-hilted dagger; “Swear that thou didst not understand, or even hear, a word of it. I must not expose myself to be accused of treachery to my patrons by such as thee, thou wily, insinuating, would-be monk. Swear, therefore, I say.”

“Any thing, any thing,” cried Fra Giovanni, in alarm, “but surely you hear all that thundering at the gate. I shall be sought for. We shall be discovered together.”

“I discovered with such an one as thou!” cried Bartolomeo, indignantly. “Off to thy post this instant, and beware how thou leave it again, to pry into the secrets of noble families. Off, I say!”

The poor lay brother was but too happy to obey the injunction. But during this altercation between the two official gossips, Colonel Maldonato and his party had exhausted their patience in gentle summons at the door, and imagining that they were discovered, and purposely excluded, had adopted the more violent means to obtain admission which were hinted at the conclusion of the last chapter. In his eagerness to talk with the strange pilgrims, Fra Giovanni had, in truth, as he himself suspected, left the door unbolted; and the Spaniard and his troopers having discovered this omission, had profited by it, and now

hastily entered the eating-hall, driving before them the poor porter, who was endeavouring to escape, he knew not whither, nor from what.

The Abbot rose with dignity as Colonel Maldonato entered the hall, his troopers at his back.

"I regret," he said, "that the remissness of the porter of the Abbey should have put you to the trouble of knocking so loudly at the door. In what can this monastery have the honour of serving you?"

"Abbot," replied the Colonel, "my business is not with you. I will soon free your halls from my presence. Constable," he continued, advancing towards the French pilgrim, "I cannot ask you to deliver up your arms, because the very becoming dress you have chosen precludes the supposition of your carrying any, but I arrest you as a prisoner of war."

"Charles of Bourbon," replied the Frenchman, drawing up his noble and elegant figure to its full height, "Charles of Bourbon has

not yet learned to surrender himself, even to an honourable foe. It is not Colonel Maldonato who can now teach him the lesson."

Warren de Whittingham silently drew his sword ; but the action was not unobserved by the Prince of France.

"Resistance, Monseigneur," more civilly replied the Spaniard, "is useless. You are a Frenchman. As an officer in the Imperial army it is my duty to make you my prisoner."

"You must be aware," interposed the Abbot, "that his Royal Highness is flying from France to join the allied armies ; and that, according to the treaties of which we have all heard, he is admitted, by the united princes, as a principal in their league."

"I know and care nothing of all that, please your reverence. He is a Frenchman, and this very day he slew an Imperial soldier. I must do my duty."

"And earn the reward offered by the Queen Regent," exclaimed a voice in the hall. It was that of Raffaele Monza, who had crept

in, by the open wicket, after the men at arms.

“Abbot,” said Vittoria Colonna, “have what force you possess collected. I have passed my word to the Prince that he should be safe while under this roof; and although, were it his own, the Marquis would burn it to the ground as the only means of purifying it after it had received so mighty a traitor to his king, his cousin, and his country, yet shall he be protected while in this house.”

“Dio mio, Dio mio!” shouted again old Fra Giovanni, in his fears, “they are going to fight, and we shall be killed and burned to death. Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!”

He rushed past the Abbot, and, darting through a side door, forcibly banged it behind him, and then, mindful of his negligence in an earlier part of the evening, locked and double-bolted it on the outside. The only egress from the room, save that by which the troopers had entered, was thus cut off from the pilgrims and the ladies. The cheek of

Hilda grew more deadly pale, as Tilton, unsheathing his rapier, placed himself beside her. That of Vittoria flushed crimson with noble resolution and daring.

For a few moments, the parties stood thus undecided; the Spaniard, not fearful of the impending fray, but measuring the great risk he was about to run, for he well knew the truth of the Abbot's account of de Bourbon's purposes. At the one end of the hall, he stood advanced in the front of his men; at the other, stood the two women; Vittoria upright and collected; Hilda leaning, unconsciously, and almost fainting, on the arm of Tilton. The two Englishmen were side by side; their weapons in their hands. Next to de Whittingham, was the Constable, also prepared; gazing with indignation on his opponents, but dropping his fine eyes when they chanced to encounter those of Vittoria Colonna. Raffaele and a couple of attendants had, also, seized weapons, and had ranged themselves beside the Abbot.

Suddenly the huge alarum bell of the abbey pealed forth from the lofty tower overhead.

"Giovanni is not such a fool, after all," murmured the Abbot as he devoutly crossed himself.

Maldonato grew evidently anxious; yet boldly exclaimed, "Trust not to your bell, gentlemen and ladies; before I entered, I assured myself that it was a beautifully tranquil night. Come, Monseigneur; you must see how vain is resistance. I should be sorry to be obliged to use violence. Your highness shall have honourable imprisonment, and will, doubtless, be speedily ransomed by the Queen. We have all heard that you are a favourite of her's!"

"Her agents wait in the hills to receive him from the Colonel's hands," shouted Raffaele; "beware, Prince, how you trust him."

"I but await his onset, good fellow," calmly replied the pilgrim. "I know the Colonel of old."

“ And shall know him better ere long,” fiercely shouted the Spaniard. “ At them, my men; and remember the reward. Alive or dead; and then, to cut the throat of that fellow who is so lustily ringing the passing bell for himself and his monks. Follow me, comrades!”

But while the troopers advanced with no evident alacrity to support their commander, a powerful voice from behind them called out “ Hold! hold! I say.” All looked instantly round, and discovered that the lower end of the room was filled with a large body of dismounted Cavalry, bearing the French colours, and pressing forward after their leader, whose heated features and soiled armour, spattered with dirt, and not without stains of a darker, ruddier hue, bore evidence of recent combat and severe exertions.

“ You here, Monseigneur!” said the officer, waving Maldonato aside with a motion of his arm.

“ You, Chevalier Bayard!” at the same instant exclaimed the Duc de Bourbon.

“I considered it my duty, Chevalier,” interposed Maldonato with discomfitted and awkward air, “to arrest the Duke of Bourbon, a Frenchman, as prisoner to the Imperial league.”

“The Duke came here unknown, demanding the security of sanctuary,” said the Abbot.”

“Colonel,” calmly rejoined Bayard, “I know you. Fortunately for you, I myself respect the rights of sanctuary, or rather the sacredness of these walls. Were it otherwise,—look round—my men outnumber yours—were it otherwise, you would be now my prisoners. Captain de la Vergne,” he said, addressing one of his officers, guard these troopers down the cliff and then let them go their way.”

“Beware, proud Frenchman, of my revenge!” furiously exclaimed the Spaniard. “We shall meet again. And we too, my fair ladies, shall meet again. It is something to have aroused the spirit of an impassible lady

and the fears of her gentle friend:—and a sweet girl she is, too! Just the little fair face that I like!”

Thus muttering to himself in scarcely audible tones, he left the hall, followed by his men, and escorted by the French troopers.

“And now, Prince,” said the Chevalier, *sans peur et sans reproche*, addressing himself to the Constable of France; “I am rejoiced to hear this plea of the good Abbot that your Royal Highness has taken sanctuary: so am I saved the necessity of fulfilling a most unpleasant duty. Your alliance with the enemy has been published; and I should have been compelled to do, from loyalty to my sovereign, what that Spaniard was about to attempt for the sake of the Queen mother’s reward. From me and mine, you are safe while in sanctuary.”

“While I knew not the Duke,” said the Marchesa, “I pledged the word of a Colonna to him that he should find safety while under the same roof with me. I thank you,

Chevalier, for enabling me to make good my word."

"That I have obliged you, noble lady," answered the Knight, "is almost a consolation under the misfortunes which have forced us to abandon our lines and retreat to the mountains."

"How!" exclaimed the Duke, hurriedly.

"My Lord Abbot," continued the Chevalier, "I must crave the hospitality of your domain for my men this night. Yours is a good position from which we may fall in with the rest of the army. Some of your Royal Highness's new friends, I grieve to say it, will overtake the Admiral at dawn, even if they do not come up with him before."

"Abbot," said the Duke, stepping forward with dignity and forced composure, "I thank you for the hospitality which was offered me when unknown, and which is now continued to me. Bayard, I honour you. Would that the councils of my cousin, Francis, had been directed by such noble hearts as yours: then

should I not now have to regret that I am driven into a different path from you. You, however, can appreciate my claims and the provocations I have endured. My kind English preservers," he added, "I thank you: and," he said, in an undertone, taking de Whittingham's hand, "I will see thee again. Signora Marchesa, forgive the turmoil which an exile has brought upon the abode which you had selected as the asylum of peace, poetry, religion, and loveliness. Think of me as you, had you been in my place, would wish to have been thought of. May your sweet friend," he added, glancing from Hilda to Tilton, "be soon charmed to happier subjects of reflection; and find no time to remember me—save in her prayers."

He bowed with courtesy to the surrounding group and slowly quitted the room, followed by Raffaella Monza, and attended by the servants of the Abbey who lighted him to his sleeping apartment.

As he left the hall, a heavy load seemed

to be taken from the spirits of all. So different were the positions of each in regard to him, that the French knight felt that it would be painful to all to allude further to his present position.

“Noble ladies,” he said, “you will excuse my attention to my military duties. The Abbot’s alarum bell summoned me so suddenly to see what assistance was acquired that I left no orders with my officers for the ensuing watch. Permit me to leave you, with orisons that you may not be again disturbed. The Abbot’s hospitality will give me a supper and a draught of wine when I return from my rounds; a cheerful meal bravely smooths off the rugged cares of the day.”

He left the room with his followers. The Marchesa of Pescara and Hilda Colonna also withdrew. They kissed the hand of the prelate who silently gave them his blessing. A servant preceded them with two lighted torches; and the Abbot was left with the Englishmen in the now peaceful hall.

CHAPTER IV.

WHO'S WHO ?

Italia, Italia ! Oh tu cui feo la sorte
 Dono infelice di bellezza onde hai,
 Funesta dote, d'infiniti guai
 Che in fronte scritti per gran doglia porte.
 Deh, fossi tu men bella o almen più forte ;
 Onde assai più ti temesse o assai
 T'amasse men chi del tuo bello ai rai
 Par che ti stringe e pur ti sfida a morte.
 Che giù dall 'Alpi non vedrai torrenti
 Scender d'armati ; ne di sangue tinta
 Bever l'onda del Po Gallici armenti.
 Ne te vedrai del non tuo ferro cinta—
 Pagnar col braccio di straniero genti—
 Per servir sempre o vincitrice o vinta.

FILICAJA.

Would any reader wish for a more detailed summary of the historical transactions of this eventful period ? We think there may be such. We think, indeed, that there

are many who, although perfectly well acquainted with the minutest details of the history of "classical" and of more modern times, are in the dark on all subjects connected with what they are pleased to call the "dark ages." It might, indeed, be made a question for discussion whether the darkness existed in those ages themselves, or whether it only hovers over the recollections of a too active public. We have our own theory on the subject: and as, which is marvellous in a theory—it tallies with our experience of facts, we will frankly detail it to the reader.

In the first place, we have observed that the period of the dark ages has gradually extended and is still extending itself. An admitted necessity exists that every man, not to say every woman and every child, pretending to a moderate degree of information, should be intimately acquainted with every event which occurred, in the then known world, from the foundation of Rome to the death of Constan-

tine:—the latter two hundred years, indeed, of this period are passed over as being not much worth attending to ; but a familiar acquaintance with all the earlier portion of it is essential to a liberal education. A perfect knowledge of the events of modern history is also expected in every one. But modern history is, to each one, the history of those times which are nearest to his own epoch. Thus, as the world grows older, the space between the “classical” ages and the history of the actual times enlarges and widens itself. Those who lived at the period of our story thought themselves as fine fellows as we now are in our own opinion. The revival of literature had introduced them to the knowledge of “classical times ;” and being fully convinced of the importance of their own period, they consigned to darkness the ages which intervened between the age of Constantine and that whence their own immediate interests arose—say the age of William the Conqueror, and of Pope Gregory the Seventh.

As the world grew still older, so did modern events still more multiply themselves, and the sixteenth century itself, the age of Elizabeth and Charles the fifth, soon became the bourne beyond which the light of knowledge extended not. But when events still thickened, when the history of the world, and the revolutions of states became still more complex, how could the busy mind, still stored with the original allowance of "classical" history, revert to so distant a period? No! the establishment of American independence and the French revolution became, to a subsequent generation, the real boundaries of the dark ages, beyond which, antiquaries only were expected to make daring excursions. We all remember how we boasted of the light of the eighteenth century; surely, then, prior to the eighteenth century, light existed not.

But can we justly expect our successors to adhere to our own limits, and to interest themselves in all those events which we find spirit-stirring? Impossible; they will still

know every event of the Punic or Peloponnesian wars; but the passing of the Reform bill, the three glorious days of July, are already marked out as their future boundary to the dark ages. Even our own early recollections are already passing away from us. Darkness is swallowing them up, and our children will know them no more.

The dark ages, in fact, are those ages, to the detailed history of which we have neither time nor inclination to go back.

This is admitted by the historian, Hume. "Here," he says, speaking of the epoch in which the events recorded in our narrative occurred, "here commences the useful as well as the more agreeable part of modern annals. Whoever carries his anxious enquiries into preceding periods is moved by a curiosity, liberal, indeed, and commendable; not by any necessity for acquiring knowledge of public affairs or the arts of civil government."

Agreeing in the principle laid down by the historian, we have yet shown that no period

can be fixed upon as the boundary to which future research shall go back. Hume foresaw not how rapidly events were approaching which would supersede those which he considered all-important. Let us endeavour to remove the clouds of three centuries, and to give our readers a summary of the events of the period to which we have called their attention, and of which they may be justifiably ignorant.

Without attempting to explain the contending claims which were advanced by the sovereign of France, and a branch of the House of Spain, to the throne of Naples, of which the latter were in possession, let it suffice that we remind the reader of the usurpation by which Ludovico Sforza, in the minority of his weak nephew, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, and his interesting and beautiful wife, established himself as Duke of Milan. In order to insure his success, he persuaded Charles VIII. of France to invade Italy and enforce his own very doubtful right to the throne of

Naples. Hence the long series of wars between the French, Spaniards, and Italians ; hence that ruin, devastation, and division of interests, from which Italy has never recovered.

By means of these conflicting interests, so created, did the usurper, Ludovico Sforza, maintain himself during his life-time. He was succeeded by his son, Maximilian ; but the latter, finding his position untenable, at length resigned his dukedom to Francis the First, of France, after the king had won the glorious battle of Marignano, under the walls of Milan. Maximilian retired, well-pleased, into private life.

That so vast an addition to the empire of the French should be quietly permitted by the princes of Italy, whose independence it endangered, was not to be expected. Stimulated by Charles V., lately elected emperor (an empty title, but his preferment to the which had excited the jealousy and ill-concealed hostility of Francis I., who had been a can-

didate for the same honour), stimulated by Charles V. who, in his own person, united the sovereignty of Spain, Austria, the Low Countries, Naples, and the greatest part of the newly-discovered western world, Leo X. and the other Italian sovereigns entered into a powerful league to expel the invaders, and to re-establish one of the family of Sforza at Milan.

The ill-conduct and rapacity of the French governor at Milan, the Mareschal de Lautrec, whom Francis had advanced to that post at the instance of his mistress, the Mareschal's sister, had made the citizens of Milan anxious participators in the objects of the league. Against this combination, Francis was little able to defend himself. He transmitted, indeed, a large sum of money to Lautrec for payment of the Swiss, who, either let out by the cantons, or privately and individually enlisted, then formed the main fighting strength of every army ; but the money was intercepted by the agents of Louise of Savoy,

mother of the king, who adopted this method in order to bring the mareschal, whom she hated, into disgrace, as well as to recruit her own finances. The dissatisfied Swiss immediately retired from the standard of de Lautrec, and joined that of the allies; the Milanese citizens rose upon him, and every town in the duchy was soon delivered from the invaders.

But the death, by poison, or, as some will have it, by an exuberance of joy at the success of his plans, the death of Leo X., who was the soul of the league and was earnestly bent upon freeing all Italy from foreign invaders, soon occasioned the dissolution of the confederacy; and, had de Lautrec been better provided either with troops or with the means of recruiting them, he might easily have regained much of the ground he had so quickly lost. For two years did a succession of conflicts desolate the north of Italy. At the end of that period, and a few months before the opening of our narrative, Admiral Bon-

nivet led a fresh army into Lombardy : but the new commander had been driven back from the gates of Milan, by the resolution of the citizens and the skill of old Colonna, and compelled to retire into winter quarters, without having done anything permanently to re-establish the authority of his master.

Why, however, it may be asked, was not that master with the army ?—he, who in the vigour of youth, endowed with most brilliant talents, with a passion for glory and war, whence glory was then thought to spring—he who, in the dreadful engagement of Marignano, had acquired such deathless fame—he who, by his personal prowess on that bloody field, had felt himself entitled to call upon the hero of the age, the Chevalier Bayard, to knight him with his own honoured sword—he, whose heart and soul were with his Italian dominions, and with his mistresses—why, it may be asked, was not Francis himself at the head of his Italian army ? Without adverting to the difficulties in which

he was placed, for a time, by the incursions of the duke of Suffolk into his northern provinces, and by the attacks of the Spaniards on his southern frontier, our tale calls us to dwell upon the history of his personal conduct towards his relation, the duke of Bourbon, whom we have already introduced to our readers.

Charles, Duc de Bourbon, was, by birth, character, talents, wealth, and accomplishments, the first subject in France. His proximity in blood to the king, his equal fondness for war and glory, his equal success in all martial exercises, the near equality of their ages, would appear to have pointed him out as the natural friend, companion, and support of his sovereign. To him, the brilliant success at Marignano was chiefly owing; to him, Francis might ever have looked as to one of the ablest generals of the day. De Bourbon, however, had the misfortune to incur the hatred of the king's mother by some remarks, which he made in conversation, on the many

intrigues and gallantries which not even age appeared to check in that bad woman. The weak condescension of the king to the violence and prejudices of his mother is well known. Who shall say that he was not also actuated by a mean jealousy of the Constable, for that he equalled him in those very qualities in which he himself excelled? We fear that history must declare such to have been the case; that his conduct was not uninfluenced by such feelings. How else can we account for the manner in which he slighted his evidently good counsels, when, on the banks of the Scheld, the two mighty rivals, Francis and Charles V., had met; and when it was in the power of the French king to have annihilated the army of the emperor, would he have condescended to follow de Bourbon's advice? Yet, not content with disregarding it, he added insult to the slight, and removed him from the command of the van of the army, which was the prerogative attached to the situation of chief constable, bestowing

it, in sight of the assembled troops and nobles, upon the duke of Alençon.

That de Bourbon's proud spirit should submit quietly to these injuries was scarcely to be expected ; and yet, with admirable forbearance, he did submit to them. He submitted to be recalled, on frivolous pretences, from the government of Milan, and to be received coldly, that is to say, in persons in his rank, to be publicly insulted, in return for his prudent conduct in that trying station ; he submitted, also, to the unjustifiable withdrawal of the pensions which had been guaranteed to him. Understanding his own position in the kingdom, he appeared likewise to understand that he could not openly resent the behaviour of his kinsman without inflicting wide-spreading injury on all.

How long this forbearance might have continued it is impossible to form an opinion, but unfortunately, the duchess of Bourbon, his wife, died about this time. The amorous portion of Louise's character immediately

got the mastery of her vindictive spirit, and although she was then not less than forty-six years of age, she could not see this most handsome and accomplished man a widower without endeavouring to secure him to herself. But de Bourbon, who had before ridiculed her intriguing disposition, was not more likely, now that he had just cause of complaint, to view her with other eyes. Although aware of the illimitable power which such a connection with the woman whose influence held the king in controul, would naturally bestow, the duke at once rejected the lady's advances, alleging that he could not, as easily as herself, transfer his feelings from scorn to affection—from malice and vindictiveness to forgetfulness and admiration. Contemned, and, in her own opinion, insulted, Louise de Savoie immediately cast aside all her loving pre-dispositions, and resumed her original hatred with more than its first fervour.

By her means, a law-suit was instituted

against the Constable for all the estates belonging to the house of Bourbon. Neither in law, nor in justice, was there the slightest plea for the claim ; yet so great was the power of the queen-mother that she secured a judgment in her favour from venal courts, and the whole property of the Duke was confiscated by their award. Human endurance could submit no longer. The Constable intrigued with the Emperor, with Henry of England, and with the Italian states ; they treated with him as an equal ; they engaged to invade France to support his quarrel ; and they allotted to him the fairest portions of that country with the title of King.

Fortunately for France, the plot was discovered in time ; and, with great difficulty, the duke made his escape in disguise into Italy, eluding all the parties which Francis and his mother had sent out to intercept him ; and escaping the last most dangerous assault which the queen had originated against him through the instrumentality of the Spanish colonel, Mal-

donato, who, though engaged with the allies whom the duke was endeavouring to join, cared not by what pretext he secured to himself the reward promised by her for the prince's apprehension.

Thus have we accounted for de Bourbon's mysterious appearance on the scene. That of Bayard was occasioned by the untoward state of the French at that time in Italy. The allies, under the command of Donna Vittoria's husband, Ferdinand d'Avalos, marquis of Pescara and of de Lanoy, the viceroy of Naples, had lately opened the campaign with renewed vigour. The French camp at Biagrasa had been stormed by the Milanese ; and Bonnivet, a brave and a most amiable and accomplished gentleman, but without any of the abilities requisite in a general, had been compelled to retreat towards the frontiers of Savoie. A detached body of cavalry, under the command of Bayard, had been that day routed by a most dexterous *coup de main* on the part of Pescara ; and the Chevalier him-

self had been in full retreat towards the main body of the French army when his course was arrested by the alarm-bell of the abbey. His ancient spirit of chivalry forbad him to pass on without enquiring the cause of the appeal. As he rode up to the monastery, he had considered that the ground would afford a good position on which his troops might take up their quarters for the night; and, though fully resolved to perform his strict duty to his sovereign, we will not deny that he had heard, with intense satisfaction, the plea of the sanctuary which the Abbot had put forth in favour of the Duke. It saved him from the necessity of arresting one whose character and abilities he admired, and whose misfortunes he pitied, although he could not excuse the course into which they had driven him. Having thus explained what might appear forced and unintelligible in the foregoing scenes, return we to our narrative.

CHAPTER V.

ENTHUSIASM.

And there, among the countless things
That keep young hearts for ever glowing—
Vague wishes, fond imaginings,
Love dreams, as yet no object knowing ;
Light-winged hopes that come unbid,
And rainbow joys that end in weeping ;
And passions among pure thoughts hid,
Like serpents under flow'rets sleeping—
'Mong all these feelings, felt whene'er
Young hearts are beating, I saw there
Proud thoughts, aspirings, high, beyond
Whate'er yet dwelt in soul so fond—
Glimpses of glory, far away
Into the bright future given ;
And fancies, free and grand, whose play,
Like that of eaglets, is near heaven.

MOORE.

“ THANKS, Monseigneur,” said Bayard to the Abbot, when, returning into the eating-hall about half an hour after he had quitted it, he found the table covered with a new supply of

refreshments and drawn nearer to the fire, which blazed up anew, "a thousand thanks for your courtesy to a poor defeated knight. I can, however, rejoice that my retreat enabled me to relieve the ladies from their fears, and to thwart the plans of those rapacious Spaniards."

He drew near to the table with the eagerness of a hungry man, thanking the Abbot at the same time for the provisions and accommodations which he had ordered to be distributed to his officers and men.

"It is sad," remarked the Abbot, "that deeds of rapine and violence should now be no longer restricted to the Spanish soldiers. They, indeed, first broke through the ancient wholesome discipline, and, in the kingdom of Naples, set the example of pillaging, equally, friends and foes, under pretence of repaying themselves the arrears to which they were entitled. Not even the authority of the Great Captain, Gonsalvo, could arrest the evil; and the system has been too alluring to other troops for them not to improve upon it."

“What prospect is there, Chevalier,” enquired Tilton, “of a cessation of these wars? You and I know one another of old, and may, I trust, avow our mutual sentiments in perfect confidence, even though we be following different banners. I am, I admit, bent on a mission of peace. What are my prospects of success?”

“I care not, Seigneur Tilton, who knows my opinion,” replied Bayard; “far less should I be unwilling to mention it to an honourable man, like you. I believe that Italy will never be tranquil so long as a ‘barbarian,’ as they please to call all foreigners, possesses any portion of the soil. An engagement will, doubtless, take place to-morrow; and if, as from our diminished resources will probably be the case, we are worsted, your chance of success will be the greater, for we shall be driven beyond the Alps.”

De Whittingham rose with flushed cheeks. “Do you expect a general engagement, to-morrow?” he hurriedly asked.

“Within twenty-four hours, certainly,” replied the Chevalier.

“Shall you be in it?” again asked the youth.

“Please God, without a doubt, I shall.”

“Oh, let me accompany you!” exclaimed the youth, advancing, with earnest gesture to the French knight.

“Warren, thou art mad!” quietly sneered Tilton.

“No, no, I am not,” rejoined de Whittingham. “Let me, noble knight, see my first field in your company.”

“Pray, since when hast thou decided which party thou wouldst favour with thy support?” asked his calculating friend.

“Honour will always be to be won on the side of Francis of France, and the Chevalier Bayard,” answered the young man.

“I should have thought,” said Tilton, “that the enthusiastic admiration of Donna Vittoria, which thou hast just declared to the Abbot and me, would have rather led thee to join her husband’s side.”

"Trifle not, Maurice;" replied de Whittingham. "Providence has introduced me to the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*." He timidly bent his eyes to the ground as he said this; then raising them again with a smile, "Let me, Monseigneur, attend you in the expected engagement."

"Brave youth," answered Bayard, kindly taking him by the hand, "no 'fear,' I am sure, will ever bring 'reproach' on thee; judge for thine own self. If thou determine to go, I shall be right well pleased, and thankful to be attended by such a follower." De Whittingham silently kissed the knight's hand. "But where," continued Bayard, "where wilt thou get thee a horse and harness for thyself? These pilgrim cockle shells would ill stand the fire of Pescara's arquebusiers; and, indeed, do what he will, a brave man is always liable to succumb to a cowardly popper!"

"As my friend is resolved upon this wild scheme," observed Tilton, "I think I can

shew such credentials to his reverence, here, as shall induce him to mount and arm him. I shall, indeed, have further requisitions to make to him ere long. You will excuse me, Chevalier Bayard," he added, "if I do not follow the chivalric intentions of my friend. I have fought in my time—enough, at least, to shew that I can fight where need is: but I am now too old to fight for mere fighting's sake. Besides, I have not disguised that I am now an orator, as the Italians call us envoys; my business is, therefore, to talk rather than to fight. However, I will wait till de Whittingham has taken his pleasure. As you expect so soon a decisive engagement, I shall be better able to frame my oratory by knowing its results."

He then took Bayard aside, and informing him that Warren de Whittingham was of gentle blood and of a high family, and was moreover his own most valued friend, he thus besought the kind offices of the French Knight towards him. This the other readily promised :

and a few words, addressed also aside to the Abbot, secured from his reverence the ready offer of whatever might be required for the full equipment of the young soldier. The good man summoned an attendant : and, desiring him to conduct the two Englishmen into what might be called the armoury of the monastery—for no house could, in those days, be without its store of arms—he gave them his blessing, and sent them to select whatever they might require ere they retired to rest. Bayard, also, soon took his leave for the night : and, the Abbot withdrew to his own apartment,—thanking God that the evening had passed more peacefully than he had, at one time, anticipated.

We have said that, when the Duke of Bourbon retired to rest, he had been followed by Raffaele Monza, the Spanish trooper whom Colonel Maldonato had attempted to slay. He had done so at a sign from the Constable, who, when alone in the chamber to which he had been shown, thus accosted him :

“Well, good fellow. I thank thee for the readiness thou hast just shown in my defence. How can I requite thee for it?”

“Why, please your Excellency, I am not like the Colonel, who looks to the reward to be got by every action, good or bad. I have served under your Grace before now, and you once did me the honour to look on me with commendation:—I suppose you had not time to think of it afterwards. Besides, I had quarrelled with the Colonel, and was obliged to keep out of reach of his dagger.”

“Where didst thou serve under me?” enquired the Duke.

“Oh, at Milan, and in the Low Countries.”

The Duke knit his brows. “Dost know this country well?” he enquired, after a pause.

“Every part of it, from Naples to Savoie, as well as I know the back of my charger,” replied Raffaëlle. “I think we have conquered and lost, and feasted and starved upon every field and every vineyard in it by turns.”

“Will you take service with me again?”

asked the Duke : “ first as a guide ; then as one of my guards ? ”

“ Your Grace must excuse me. I want to go to Rome. There is one in Rome I have not heard of for some time.”

“ Ah, a mistress is it ? ” said de Bourbon : “ why, an old soldier like thee would not surely refuse to enlist on thine own terms for the sake of a girl ? ”

“ *La scusi*,” again suggested Raffælle. “ I have been a soldier so long that I begin to think there is something in the world better than soldiering. No ; I must go to Rome ; and your Excellency, I think from what I gathered in the fray, will be for going to the army hereabouts. Our roads could not agree.”

De Bourbon looked grave ; and Raffælle added,

“ Is there any thing else I can do for your Eccellenza ? ”

“ Yes ; find out quietly what sleeping room in the monastery is given to the youngest of

the two Englishmen ; and come and tell me when he has retired to it."

Raffaelle cheerfully promised to obtain the desired information, and to return again to impart it to the Duke.

"And so," thought the constable of Bourbon to himself as he began, with hurried and irregular steps, to pace the room on Raffaelle's leaving it—"and so these are the first results of my revenge ! My life attempted by assassins—but that I care not for : despised by a woman whose husband I am going to join ; told by her that fire is the only means of purifying a house in which I have resided !—My offers declined by a common trooper, who has sold his services for the last twenty years to whoever would pay most for them :—even he declines to join me—civilly indeed ; but yet he shows that he does not think of me as he did before my—my—my treachery—an' they will ! Kings and princes are, indeed, anxious to receive me ;—but only for the sake of what they can get through my means. They are

above public opinion: they think not, they feel not, with the public. Of the opinion of the public I have had a sample this evening. A woman repudiated me: women only repeat opinions which they have imbibed from others, and which their own natural violence of feeling does not permit them to conceal: a woman repudiated me—a serf declines my service! So—so. Would that I could have acted otherwise! Oh Francis, would that thou hadst allowed me to love and serve thee! And all that now impends is to be traced to the violence of that worthless woman!—I had done nothing to make her my enemy. Because the Queen Dowager has a regard for my family, this incarnate she-devil was to set her son against it!—What could I do?—Could I act otherwise? What will history say of me?—slighted—insulted—was I to sell myself to my persecutor to satisfy her new unbridled passion? Disgusting thought! What then? Attacked by new quibbles: legally, as it is called—legally stript of all—reduced to beg-

gary — was it to be endured ? What will history say ?” he again asked, and paused in the centre of the room, his arms folded across his chest, his head bent down upon them. Long he stood in this position : then, more slowly, paced to and fro. He cast himself on a seat, and, unconsciously drawing his dagger from his belt, began cutting notches in his pilgrim staff which lay beside him. Deeply immersed in thought, he continued this occupation, but without being aware that his hands were employed upon it. The dagger was sharpened at the sides, as well as towards the point, and he made some little impression on the sturdy staff.

“ What will history say of me ?” he again asked himself, as he laboured more eagerly and still more thoughtlessly at his strange occupation. The staff snap in two.

“ This support, this disguise, is ended,” he exclaimed, starting up with renewed energy. “ I am now near the scene of action ; I must now appear in my new character ;—

and history will say of me—that which I myself give it to say! What will it say of me, indeed? folly to doubt! Success will stamp me at once as a hero who nobly avenged himself for unparelled injuries.—Why should not Charles of Bourbon commence a new line of French kings?—Charles Martel—Capet—did so:—who blames them? Why should not I do the same, and silence or dazzle history till she be unable to record the tale. So be it:—away for ever with remorse—away with thoughts of the past: success shall justify me: it must justify me: to the future I commit myself.”

He sank again on the seat; his head reclined on the table; and he was soon buried in profound sleep.

Two hours later, he awakened with a start; and, grasping the weapon which he had laid beside him, gazed sternly towards the door. It opened, and Raffaele Monza quietly entered.

“If it please your Royal Highness, I have discovered the young Englishman’s cell. He

is only just now gone into it for the night, having been detained choosing armour and weapons for himself. In faith, the good fathers seem to have enough in their stores to equip a whole troop."

De Bourbon silently signed to him to precede him, and they left the apartment together.

After threading one or two corridors by the light of the lamp which Raffaele carried, they paused before a door which the Duke silently opened. He stood in a plain cell, about nine feet square, such as were allotted to the monks, but which was furnished with some comfort and elegance. De Whittingham was polishing some of the arms which occupied the little table and several chairs. He ceased as the Constable entered, and waited with confidence—a confidence derived chiefly from his youthful elation at having again possessed himself of what, in those days, was tantamount to a new suit of clothes—until the Prince should declare the object of his visit.

"I see, my young friend," began the Duke, "that you are about to cast off your assumed attire. I need not ask whether you do not willingly don one to which, I doubt not, you have been more accustomed?"

"Most willingly, Monseigneur;" replied the youth. "That disguise was a constant restraint upon my feelings as well as my actions."

"Have the good monks been able to trick you out according to your taste?"

"Tolerably, Monseigneur. Their steel is not very bright, but a few weeks of care and use will smarten it up famously."

"And how dost thou intend to employ it?" enquired the Constable, "I too shall don some harness to-morrow, I hope. Wilt thou accompany me?"

De Whittingham was silent. The question was, in fact, so unexpected that he knew not, on the moment, what answer to make.

"I had a sample of thy character and daring before thou knewest me," continued the

Prince. "Thou has now heard that I am no pilgrim. I shall join my allies to-morrow. Wilt thou attach thy fortunes to mine, and accompany me as one of my Squires?"

The colour flushed in Warren's cheek, his eye lighted up an instant, then glistened with suffused moisture. He dropped on one knee before the Duke, and, taking hold of his hand,

"Noble Prince," he began——

"Well, well," interrupted the Duke; "I have understood that thou art of gentle blood; for thy gallant bearing, I myself will vouch. A knight errant, as I believe thou art, I rejoice that it will be in my power to repay to thee the debt I owe thee. With me, thy merits will not be overlooked."

"Thanks, noble Prince," said de Whittingham, rising with a more composed mien; "believe that I am grateful for the kind offer, though it came upon me so unawares that I knew not how to respond to it."

“ And now thou art about to decline it !” interrupted the Prince, rendered suspicious and captious by the events of the evening. “ Charles of Bourbon is not used to press his favour upon wandering and disguised champions.”

“ To obtain such a patron as the Duke of Bourbon once was,” replied the young man, now nettled into self-possession and resentment, “ would have been the highest ambition of my heart. As it is,—I may only say that I have already attached myself to an unstained pennon.”

“ Indeed,” exclaimed the Duke ; “ and who may be the commander who has been so highly favoured ?”

“ The Chevalier, without fear—and without *reproach*,” somewhat pointedly answered the Englishman. “ Would, Monseigneur, that, in following him to-morrow, I could also follow your Highness !”

“ Thanks, for the wish, good youth,” said the Constable, somewhat more mildly. “ Thou

couldest not have better chosen. I might, indeed, have done more for thee—”

“ Monseigneur, pardon me,” interrupted de Whittingham. “ I am, indeed, grateful to your Highness. What could be more tempting than your offer? I possess nothing, nothing now save my sword and my honour. I must keep the one as bright as the other. And, as I am not a subject of the King of France, I might, perhaps, without reproach—”

“ Have followed a traitor to the king of France, thou wouldest add,” interrupted the Prince. “ Enough said, fair young Sir. The sincerity of you Islanders is most admirable! I will not, however, be led to forget that thou hast done me some service. Fare thee well, and mayest thou prosper in that which thou hast undertaken. But if thou act as Bayard expects of those about him, he will take care that we meet again to-morrow. I will endeavour to protect thee.”

De Whittingham's pride fired up as the

Constable turned to withdraw ; he repressed himself, however ; and, taking the lamp, prepared respectfully to light the Prince to his apartment. The latter, however, saying that he was already attended, checked him at the door of the cell ; and, looking on him more kindly in return for his respectful obeisance, rejoined Raffaele Monza.

“ Now, good fellow,” he said to the latter ; “ I have already had my night’s rest. Conduct me to the quarters of that noisy porter. The moon is up, and I must journey forwards.”

“ But, Monseigneur, not without a guide ?”

“ Tush, good fellow, I am no stranger to this country, as thou mayest remember. The good Abbot unwittingly gave me much information, and I have not far to go to meet those I seek. Conduct me to old Fra Giovanni, as they call him, and I will manage the rest.”

Fra Giovanni and the Duke did manage the rest. The moon rose high in the heavens as

he emerged, by a side door, from the monastery. The porter pointed out to him a secluded path leading away to the right. In the distant valley, a thick cloud of white smoke canopied what appeared to be a mass of low smouldering fire. This, his knowledge of the country and of the position of the armies, enabled the Constable immediately to recognise as proceeding from the watch-fires of the Marquis of Pescara's troops. He needed no other guide; and, cheerfully wishing good night to the porter, to whom, as well as to Raffaele, he threw a broad piece of gold, he advanced, at a brisk pace, along his moon-lit path.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEPARTURE.

“ I saw young Harry—with his beaver on,
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly armed—
Rise from the ground like feather’d Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropped down from the clouds
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.”

HENRY IV.

THE earliest beams of the sun scarcely streaked the horizon, and Warren de Whittingham already gazed from the window of the little cell in which he had passed the night. All was tranquil and cheerful in the scene which he overlooked. The heavy dew, which had fallen during the night, was sliding in large drops from the boughs of the trees in the surrounding forest. A thick fog lay over the ever inundated rice-grounds in the spreading

plain of Lombardy which extended wide at a short distance beneath. As rice cannot be produced unless the roots of the plants be flooded in nearly stagnant water, the cultivation was generally prohibited within several miles of the capital; but during these disastrous wars the usual embankments had been neglected; the water had overflowed its usual channels; and a stagnant pool now spread on every side, increasing the unhealthiness of the already infected air of Milan.

On the more elevated parts of the hill on which the monastery arose, yet placed so as to be screened from observation by the low underwood, a few French troopers wearily paced their rounds: their harquebusses were cast negligently over their shoulders, while the slow match with which to ignite them reclined against some neighbouring tree. A stray shot was occasionally heard in the direction of Pescara's encampment, and behind the monastery, towards the quarters to which he had heard that the French General, Bonnivet, was retreating. These

sounds were, in those days, and in that country, too common too excite a thought : they reminded our hero, however, that he had engaged in no imaginary warfare, and prompted him to prepare to take his part in whatever might ensue.

He turned him to the chairs, on which lay the different articles of armour which he had selected during the preceding evening ; and his heart beat high within him at the sight of them. For some weeks, he had secretly murmured against a disguise which oppressed his spirit, as he was not politician enough to understand its purport ; great, therefore, was his joy at renouncing the borrowed frock, and at the prospect of again appearing in that character to which all his education and course of life had hitherto tended to mould him. But if his satisfaction at taking his station in active life was so great, how must it have been augmented by the thought that he entered upon it under the eye, and with the implied favour of the first knight in that age !

And though he had declined the friendly offers of the Constable of Bourbon, he did not think that the Duke was irrevocably displeased by his refusal; and most fortunate did he esteem himself that the events of the last twenty-four hours had secured to him the favour of two of the most eminent leaders in Europe.

And Vittoria Colonna — was she forgotten in this retrospect of the events of the last evening? Most assuredly she was not. De Whittingham, on the contrary, had thought of her more than he was willing to admit to himself. Vainly did he endeavour to alter the course of his pre-dispositions towards her by reflecting on the energy, not to say vehemence and pride, of the feelings which she had betrayed on discovering the quality of the French pilgrim. Still, as he strove to persuade himself that her conduct had been unamiable and unfeminine, he was reminded that a woman, filling the exalted station that she had ever occupied, was not to be judged by those rules of decorum which applied to the

more humble of her sex. Descended from a family of princely power and almost princely rule; allied to one on whom, from his youth upwards, the eyes of Europe had been fixed in admiration; courted herself as one who took a high place in the ranks of those who were foremost in restoring the literature of their country, and in erecting what the world has admitted to be its second Augustan age, Vittoria Colonna, the wife of Ferdinand d'Avalos of Pescara, was surely called upon to pronounce her opinions when it might have been becoming in other females to remain silent!

"No," thought de Whittingham, "it is impossible to find anything to blame, either in her speech, look, or manner. She is all perfect; and her evident love for her husband makes me admire her still more: it proves how worthy and how loveable she herself must be. My thoughts, however, must not dwell on so pleasing a subject. Would that Maurice had not spoken so foolishly ere he took me into her presence! Let me, however, turn to my en-

gement with Bayard, and prepare to appear before him, and to justify the high favour he has shewn me."

He turned him to his armour, and, taking up the leg pieces, prepared to buckle them upon him, when the door opened, and Raffaele Monza stepped into the room.

"I doubted, Seigneur Chevalier," he said, "whether you were yet awake, till I heard the rattle of that gear. At all events, there is news which ought to urge you to all speed; and I thought a squire would be of service to you, if you will accept the hands of a poor trooper, in default of one better born, to lace and buckle your harness."

"I am thankful to thee, Raffaelle, for so I have heard thee called," answered the Englishman. "'Squire or man-at-arms, a trusty attendant will be most useful to me in my isolated condition. What sayest thou; wilt take the office with me, and, after the business which we have now in hand, follow my pennon, if I can find one, to Rome?"

"To Rome, is it, that your knighthood is bent?" exclaimed Raffaele, as he assisted the youth in what was, then, the most important part of a man's toilet. "To Rome! why I have just refused the Duke's offer, because I wished to go to Rome. Your proposal seems to come expressly to reward my good intentions. But I thought you followed the Chevalier Bayard?"

"I do in the engagement which he expects; but, if I return from it alive, my course must be bent, forthwith, with my friend to Rome."

"The offer is too tempting not to be caught at," said Raffaele. "But I am too old a soldier," he added, thoughtfully, "to attach myself to you in your journey, unless I also accompany you in this fight you are seeking out. I have had enough of wars, and did not wish for more, if I could live without them; but I must shew my new master that I am not afraid of them."

"Thou wilt go with me, then, to day?"

"An' it please you. The Chevalier will be glad enough of a recruit," replied Raffaele.

“So be it,” rejoined de Whittingham. “But what is the news from the army thou didst speak of?”

“About an hour ago, Sir,” his follower replied, “a horseman arrived with all speed from the French army, bringing directions to the Chevalier Bayard that he should hasten to join the main body as soon as possible.”

“What, then, are they already set forward?” anxiously enquired the young man.

“Not yet, Sir,” replied his attendant. “Never fear but we shall have our full share of the day’s work. But the Chevalier considered that his men, as well as their horses, had been so much jaded yesterday that a few hours’ longer rest would be required, in order that they might be fit for service when they should join the Admiral.”

“So then,” observed de Whittingham, as he threw over his armour a loose doublet of white cloth, and placed a velvet cap of the same colour, and turned up with ermine, on his head; “so then, I will now go and see what

is stirring in the monastery. Do thou bring down my helmet and lance; and see that the horse, which the good monks allowed me to select last night, be well caparisoned, and in readiness when the trumpet calls us to mount. What wilt thou thyself do for a steed?"

"I am too old a trooper," answered Raffaele, "to leave that matter in doubt more than is needful. Before I followed Colonel Maldonato — my curses on him! — into the the monastery last night, I took advantage of the absence of the rest of his followers to lead my horse somewhat apart from the others; so that when Captain de la Vergne started the Colonel on his road, as the Chevalier Bayard ordered, he and the rest never thought of it; and I afterwards housed it comfortably in the Abbot's stables."

De Whittingham was well pleased to hear this statement; for, after the Abbot's generous conduct towards himself, he had felt some scruple in applying to him to mount his attendant also. Still, as he suspected that

the courtesy he had experienced had its origin in a secret understanding between the Abbot and Maurice Tilton, he would have tested the power of the latter's influence still further, had it been necessary.

In the court-yard of the monastery, Warren de Whittingham was soon hailed by Maurice Tilton.

"Now, I warrant me," the latter cried, "that thou feelest as proud and self-confident after throwing off thy pilgrim slough, as if thou hadst never worn armour before! But, in truth, the steel harness is more becoming to thee—at least it will be so while it retains its present innocent, spotless hue."

"That will not be long," rejoined his friend, "if the accounts I hear prove true."

"True enough, be certain," said Tilton. "Thou wilt soon see the Imperialists flee before thee. Why, man, they will take thee, in thy white armour, surmounted by thy white plume, for a personification of holy St. George! Pity we did not select a grey horse for thee ;

all, then, would have feared thee as Death on his white charger."

"What could I do?" peevishly replied de Whittingham. "I was obliged to choose the harness that fitted me best. A steel coat cannot be straitened or enlarged like a silk doublet. I had no wish to sport the colours and devices which are mine by right, and, as this suit does not bear any, it best answered my purpose."

"Aye," said Maurice; "besides it corresponds with thy name, which I take to imply thou didst formerly live in a white home of some sort; though I know thou pleasest to trace it back to the Saxon—Whittinagmot."

"And pray, where didst thou," asked Warren, willing to turn the conversation from himself, "where didst thou get that fine robe in which thou hast wrapped thyself? I thought that nothing could have weaned thee from the scallop shells?"

"Nothing but the fair eyes of pretty Signorina Hilda, whom I much prefer to thy

majestic Marchesa. Whilst thou art doing battle against the lady's husband, I thought it right to strive to balance thy discourtesy, and have betaken me to the Abbot's wardrobe, that my pleadings, in thy excuse, might be more favourably received out of deference to my improved attire."

"A notable pretence on which to excuse thine own vanity!" said the friend.

"Nay, I must e'en endeavour to look my best," rejoined Tilton; "for, of a truth, that white armour of thine is choicely made—thanks to our vicinity to Milan—and sets off thy limbs to fair advantage."

"And what is of more importance to my present plans," said de Whittingham, "it is of the finest and best-tempered steel, and so rivetted that they must be good blows that make any impression upon it. Let us to the stables."

"I have been there, already," replied Tilton. "Thy horse is already armed, and I like him as well as I thought I should last

night. See, here comes thy new captain," he added, as Bayard entered the court.

"And I thank you, old friend," said the latter, in answer to Tilton's salutation, "for having brought so very handsome a cavalier to my banner. I shall rejoice in having you near me in the impending affair."

An attendant of the Abbot came up to the group. "As your Excellency's departure is delayed," he said, addressing the Chevalier Bayard, "his reverence prays you to favour him by taking your morning meal with him."

The three instantly turned them, and entered the hall in which they had been received on the evening before. The Abbot, Vittoria di Pescara, and her friend, were in conversation near the well-furnished board, and were evidently waiting their arrival.

"Although I understand that you are called away somewhat suddenly," said the Abbot, "I hope, Seigneurs Chevaliers, that you will break your fast with me ere you proceed forwards."

These words, though addressed to the three

strangers, generally, were directed, by a pointed and courteous bow, to the transformed pilgrims.

“We are always early risers,” said the Marchioness. “I find that the freshness of the morning, acting upon the recruited frame, generally produces freshness and energy of thought. But, this day, Hilda and I should have been particularly loth to miss the opportunity of taking leave of one so justly and widely renowned as the Chevalier Bayard, and of my old English friend and the young companion who so well becomes what I, at once, recognise as the dress natural to his station in life.”

“That dress, fair lady,” replied de Whittingham, blushing to the temples at his own audacity, and wishing that he had his helmet on his head, with the bars of its visor closed, to screen his countenance, “that dress is now first assumed for a stricken field, in which the fate of nations may be decided. But with your approval so to cheer me to the fight, and the

banner of the Chevalier to lead me on, I were indeed, a recreant knight did I not attempt to justify the approbation of the one and the confidence of the other."

"Were you not bent against the Marquis," rejoined the lady, approvingly, "I do not know that I could have wished for a more gallant chevalier to espouse my every quarrel, according to the olden plan, and as you boast your readiness to do. In these times, however, the best friends must occasionally espouse different sides, and there is no probability that I shall have cause to require the protection of your lance, now that we have put Colonel Maldonato to flight."

De Whittingham felt abashed, he scarcely knew why, and stooped his head over his plate. So shy, in truth, was his character that, although he had, by an effort, shook off his usual reserve so far as to enable himself to reply, in the language of the age, to Donna Vittoria's first encomium upon his altered appearance, he was unable to sustain his

courage, and shrank from the playful manner in which she continued the conversation, as though she had repelled what he now considered to be his own unwarrantable forwardness. Had he felt less interest in securing the favourable opinion of the lady; had he, consequently, admired her less, he would have been more at his ease, and might have sustained the conversation with becoming spirit. As it was, he only betrayed the ingenuous frankness and reserve of his own disposition; and perhaps his modesty pre-disposed Vittoria more in his favour than could have been effected by the most spirited conversation of the most gallant and self-confident knight of the period.

De Bayard saw the confusion of his young self-elected companion in arms, and, with his natural courtesy, hastened to his relief.

“You are, indeed, fair ladies,” he said, “early risers; for as I entered the Abbey chapel this morning to attend early service, methought I saw two visitants from a better

world joining in the devotions in the gallery. Your own avowal, *bella Marchesa*, as to your early habits, could alone have undeceived me."

"How sad," replied Donna Vittoria, "that these troublous times should call away such perfect specimens of chivalry to the rougher portion of their duties!"

"Notwithstanding that kind expression of regret," Tilton interposed, "I fear, from your admiration of the warlike appearance of my young friend, that you will be disappointed, ladies, when you hear that I am left by him to fulfil all the duties of a *chevalier de salon*."

"What!" said Hilda in surprise, "do you not go to the army?"

She blushed at her own eagerness, and looked up timidly, and, as for support, to the Marchioness. The latter, however, appeared to enjoy her confusion, and remained silent.

"No, *bella Signorina*," said Tilton, evidently much flattered by her sudden expres-

sion of interest. "My fighting days are over—at least for the present. My friend, Warren, chooses, whether I will or not, to thrust himself into what does not concern him; and I must needs wait his return; if you, dear ladies, will endure my society, and the Abbot will afford me hospitality, for a day or two."

The answer of the Abbot and of the ladies was cut short by the notes of a bugle which suddenly resounded under the windows of the room. Bayard and the two Englishmen immediately rose.

"Farewell, ladies," said the French Knight. "That sound tells me that my men are mounted and ready to move forward. Many thanks, reverend Abbot, for your hospitality and courtesy to me and mine. Donna Vittoria, it has been a solace to me to meet with one so fair and so justly renowned amid the disasters of the last few hours: the memory of this interview with you and your beautiful friend will never be forgotten by me. We have prayed this morning before the same altar:

let me still hope to be remembered in kindness, and that you will impute it to me as a misfortune, but not as a dereliction of what I owe to you, that I am obliged to contend against those whom you most cherish."

"Chevalier," said the lady, "I am only grateful for the assistance you have already afforded us. Such a noble champion, as you, is always appreciated and esteemed, whether as friend or foe. You have your duties. We cannot, however, make the same excuse for this young knight-errant whom you have enveigled from us: he had no particular call to either party."

"Had I not looked upon you, Signora, as so far superior to all worldly interests and parties as to belong properly to a higher sphere," said de Whittingham again, excited by the occasion, "I should at once have prayed for admission into the ranks of whatever party you favoured. As it was, I could not omit the opportunity of witnessing the conduct of the noble knight who has so kindly allowed me to accompany him."

“There, that will do,” interrupted Tilton, clapping him on the back till his steel corslet rang again. “You improve wonderfully. Nothing like foreign travel! Now get on thy head-piece; and remember, dear Warren, who you are. Although disowned by them, you represent your family — and England. Let me see you here again in triumph.”

The two friends grasped each other's hands as they passed into the court beneath: Raffaele was there in attendance with de Whittingham's helmet and lance. The youth was not sorry to hide his emotion by the action of placing it and lacing it on his head. He took his lance in hand, and, without touching the stirrup with his plated shoe, sprang at once lightly into his saddle. Lowly, and yet cheerily did he bow till the white plumes of his helmet swept the chesnut mane of his charger. The two ladies returned his salute with an encouraging wave of the hand; and stood long at the oriel window of the hall, watching, with Maurice Tilton and the Abbot,

how the valiant troop slowly wound adown the bridle path and disappeared amongst the thick underwood in the lowly ravines of the forest.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

“ And may, at last, my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown, and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew ;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.”

MILTON'S PENSEROSO.

THE Reader may have observed that little regret was exhibited by Maurice Tilton at the delay occasioned in his journey by de Whittingham's sudden resolution to open, what he anticipated would be, the one campaign of a warlike life, under the guidance of so renowned a knight as Bayard. As an envoy of peace, Maurice had, in truth, given quite

sufficient reason to mark the propriety of his not committing himself with either party. He had also truly, though lightly, hinted at his real feelings with respect to the business of war. He had fought, in his early youth, as a volunteer under Pescara; in the field of Flodden he had, also, distinguished himself; but his natural disposition had lately prompted him to withdraw from the boisterous life of the camp, and to seek more congenial occupation, for an active and ambitious mind, in the complicated intrigues of Henry the Eighth's splendid court. He loved to mark the strife of others—insinuating the while, by his general conduct and rather supercilious expression, that he belonged to an order of beings far superior to those whose brute force and purely military capacities (as he loved to consider them) were put in requisition according to the combinations of those intriguing superior minds amongst which he pleased to rank himself.

To have accompanied de Whittingham in

his present expedition would, therefore, have been inconsistent both with the envoy's present pursuits and the general tone of his character. Other feelings made him mark the departure of his friend, and his own consequent delay at the monastery, with pleasure. He had, as we have seen, been several times in Italy before now. Intimately acquainted, as he had before become, with the Marquis of Pescara and his lady, he had also been the kind and conciliating friend to the little girl who formed one of their family circle. As a sweet-tempered and beautiful child, Hilda Colonna had won many an hour of play and many a thoughtless pledge of kindness from the lively young soldier. But when, at his last visit, four years anterior to this time, the lovely child had grown up into the budding girl of fourteen, gentle and sweet-tempered as ever, but stamped, by that very gentleness, with a seriousness of disposition beyond her years, the youth of twenty-six found himself abashed by the impossibility of treating her with the

familiarity he had used of old, or with the decorum and respect which her age would soon call for. Though, therefore, but little intercourse had passed between them, somewhat more than a passing impression had been produced by the play-mate of his earlier days; an interest in her fate had been awakened within him, which succeeding events had, indeed, obliterated in his mind, but which had returned, with renewed force, at sight of the very lovely young woman before whom he had, unexpectedly, appeared on the preceding night, and whom he had instantly recognised as the flaxen-haired little Hilda of his boyhood.

Well pleased, therefore, was Maurice Tilton to accede to the proposal of his enthusiastic friend, de Whittingham, and thus to secure to himself, for a day or two, the opportunity of renewing his intimacy with the most gifted woman of her age, and with one whom he had met with blended feelings of remembered childish fondness and deep interest and admiration.

With such sentiments, he sought the apartment of Vittoria Colonna some three hours after the departure of the military cavalcade.

The Marchesa and her friend were seated at a table that was covered with paper, writing materials, two or three volumes, and different articles of female needle-work. An open writing-desk was before the former. Hilda was looking over some verses, while she struck a few notes on the guitar that rested on her knee. Both blushed as the Englishman entered the room. Hilda made a motion to lay down the instrument, while Donna Vittoria extended her beautiful arm to reach the paper in the hand of her friend.

“Nay, care mie Signore, nay, my dear ladies,” said Tilton, “if my presence interrupts your elegant pursuits in this manner, I will e’en betake me to the Abbot’s armoury, choose out a rusty harness, and follow my friend at all the speed of the fattest horse in the stables of the monastery.”

“Why, Hilda, dear,” enquired the elder

lady, "why wouldst thou lay down thy guitar? Don Maurizio has often heard thee play and sing in former days; nay, you have often played and sung together."

"Dear Vittoria," said Hilda, blushing to the temples at her recollections of those former days, "dear Vittoria, the Chevalier complained that he interrupted thee also. Thou drawest attention to me, that thou mayest, unperceived, put away thine own writing."

"Yes, yes, bella Vittoria," said Maurice: "I saw all the *finesse* of your appeal to your friend's guitar. But I suspect that your verses and her music were both employed together; and I cannot allow the separation of that which, although perfect apart, must be unequalled when conjoined. Now let me entreat," he added; "on the claims of an old friend."

"Indeed it was a foolish feeling on my part," said the marchioness; "and was prompted rather by the habits of society than by my own judgment. That I do occasionally

endeavour to write is no secret, since some kind person has, without my sanction, published several of my attempts. And I know not why a woman should feel additional shyness because she has addressed her lines to her husband. I am sure that no other source of inspiration could produce any effect on me, unless, indeed, I wrote on religious subjects. Hilda, there is the paper," she continued, as she returned the loose sheet.

"It is a song," said Hilda, turning to Tilton, "that the Marchioness has just composed, and addressed to Don Ferdinand. I was trying if it would suit an old tune. So you must make allowances for a first attempt."

"I shall make no allowance at all, fair Hilda," said Maurice, with animation. "I shall use my own privilege of finding all the fault I can; but then, I could never find any opportunity of exercising it on you."

While the two old friends thus endeavoured to recognise one another as such, Donna Vittoria had raised a handkerchief to those full

black eyes, and silently dried up the moisture which had suffused their lustre at the close of her last observation. No one made any remark upon the emotion which had been called up by the thought of her husband's dangers. Maurice placed an embroidered stool to support the musician's foot; and observed, with pleasure, that its tiny proportions corresponded with the rest of her delicate figure. He seated himself on another somewhat higher at the feet of the two ladies; while Hilda, in a tremulous voice, of little compass, but of beautiful softness, warbled the following lines.

Gone—gone—why did he leave me?*

Gone—gone—must it be so?

War—war—ever must grieve me,

Ever bring absence and woe.

Sad—sad is absence, believe me,

When hearts with fondness o'erflow!

Hope—hope smiles to deceive me,

But all its falseness I know.

Vain—vain his triumphs! for ever

Foes still succeed to the slain.

* These lines are written for the pretty German air, "Du, du liegst mir im Herzen."

Still—still must he conquer, and never
Peace, that he fights for, obtain.
Scarce—scarce do we meet, but we sever ;
Honour still calls him again,
Vain—vain every silent endeavour,
Still must I weep and complain.

Come—come, my dear one, I pray thee !
War has its triumphs, I own,
But say, can glory repay thee
Hours that in absence are flown ?
What—what though princes obey thee,
Offering sceptre and crown ;
Come—come—let me delay thee,
This—this fond heart is thy throne.

Dark—dark ev'ry hour that comes o'er me,
When thou art distant away.
Love—love still shadows before me
Terrors I may not betray.
Come—come—come, and restore me
Joys that can never decay ;
Come—come ! and if thou implore me,
I will thy fondness repay.

As Hilda concluded, Maurice respectfully raised the hand of the fond wife to his lips. “ Console yourself, dear lady,” he said. “ These wars must soon draw to a close ; and Don Ferdinand will then retire, covered with such

a lasting fame as will compensate to you for all your distresses."

The Marchesa silently signed to him not to notice her, as she endeavoured to repress her emotion by rising, and walking to the window.

"You have made much progress in your singing, fair Hilda," said Maurice, laying the guitar on the table: "as I anticipated, I see no opportunity of finding fault with you. The air suits the words most perfectly. Do you yourself write verses as well as you sing them when written?"

"Me, seigneur!" exclaimed Hilda. "I love all that is written by my dear friend, and most of that which she points out to me in the productions of the writers with whom she is acquainted. But it is enough for me to admire others."

"And which of the many writers who now illustrate Italy do you most admire?" enquired Maurice, anxious to obtain some insight into the mind and acquirements of his old friend.

"The Marchesa's dear friend, the Countess

Gambara, is a sweet and animated writer. But I fear that so many ladies have lately given themselves up to writing poetry, in imitation of these two friends, that they will bring the art into discredit. If none write but those who could equal the dear Marchesa, we need not fear having too many poets."

"Why, dear Hilda, interposed the Marchioness, "why wouldst thou wish to check them? The occupation amuses and interests them; and several are persons of superior talent. What, however, I most lament, Maurice, is the mass of satirical and burlesque writings with which Italy has been inundated of late years. I can scarcely pardon Ariosto, for having given the sanction of his immortal name and example to this style of composition."

"But surely, Vittoria," Hilda interposed, "nothing can be more charming than his Orlando?"

"I do not speak of it, Carina," replied her friend; "but of his satirical pieces. That on

his mean patron the Cardinal Ipolito d'Este, who withdrew his quarterly pension of twenty-four crowns because he refused to sacrifice his health and leisure in order to accompany his stupid Reverence into Hungary—that satire is most excusable. But he has, at other times, yielded too much to the spirit of the age; and even his great poem bears traces of this condescension. In many passages, he has certainly degraded the poet into a mere relater of piquant stories. Poor Ariosto! I have lately heard that he has been sent on some troublesome business to Ferrara.”

“It strikes me,” said Maurice, “that, excepting of course yourself, Donna Vittoria, Italy has never possessed a real poet whose writings have declared him to be such. Ariosto, you have just insinuated, is a most entertaining story-teller: Tasso had, indeed, fine feelings and perceptions, and would have risen to the rank of an original poet, could he have renounced his slavish imitation of Virgil. But yet I know not if I can justly award him

even this merit. My friend de Whittingham, who is somewhat of a judge in matters of taste and feeling, declares that, if he had, like Tasso, occasion to speak of the powers of darkness—he would endeavour to make them to be pitied as well as feared: and would never degrade them as they have been degraded by Tasso's description of them with horns and tails twisted and knotted according to the representation given in every strolling exhibition of a Christian mystery."

"How then would he describe them?" asked the Marchioness with interest.

"As emanations from the Godhead—degraded from the order for which they were created, but still mindful of their original high destiny, and appearing and acting like fallen angels, not like natural-born monkeys."

"I never heard of feelings like those you describe," the lady replied thoughtfully. "That young man must be gifted with a superior mind. But still, Sir Maurice, I must not allow you to cry down our whole Italian poetic

phalanx in order that a northern barbarian may triumph in their defeat. What say you to Petrarch—what to Dante's divine comedy?"

"Forgive me, dear ladies both," replied Tilton; "but not even the high names just mentioned can induce me to change my opinion. Petrarch has chosen to represent himself—whether truly or not, I care not—as a love-sick sonneteer. Dante had, indeed, the mind of a poet: but by his choice of a subject and by the manner in which he has treated it, he has degraded himself into a writer of political squibs and pasquinades—into a mere party and factious libeller. Had his feeling been more sublimed and elevated above the interests of his day, he would have chosen a subject more adapted to his naturally gentle and pathetic muse: as it is, she is only occasionally perceived amongst the crowds of ignoble images and rancourous and vindictive feelings which he has called up in her name."

"Basta! basta!" cried the Marchioness, uplifting her hands in affected horror. "No

more of your barbarous criticisms, I conjure you. This is just the way with you English ! you come amongst us and frankly tell us how inferior everything on which we pride ourselves is to what you yourselves possess in your little island. And then you expect us to be mightily obliged and gratified by the sincerity of your unvarnished opinions ! I'll hear no more."

"Do not, dear Vittoria," exclaimed Hilda, "Sir Maurice will otherwise give his equally kind opinion of your own compositions. You cannot escape, where Ariosto, Tasso, Dante and Petrarch, are so roughly condemned."

"The very power of perceiving the faults of the great men you have named," gallantly replied Maurice, "enables me to appreciate the chaste elegance of the Princess of poets."

"Tush, tush," cried the Marchioness. "You cannot, by personal flattery, efface the remembrance of the affront you have offered to my country. Let us fly from his rude satire, Hilda. The day is cheerful ; let us stroll

through these pleasant-looking woods. For you, discourteous chevalier, we forbid you not, but we do not invite you, to accompany us. Ah, how much you might have profitted by following the gallant and polite Bayard! These Frenchmen are not, with all their faults, so plain-spoken as you triumphantly pride yourselves upon being. The Chevalier Bayard would have taught you more politeness than you have just exhibited."

Tilton made some answer in accordance with the spirit in which the Marchesa had merged her late anxieties; and gaily followed the ladies as they sallied forth into the adjoining woods.

For awhile they paced the levelled paths that had been cut by the monks in the immediate vicinity of the monastery. The country was in too unsettled a state to permit them, with safety, to extend their walk to a greater distance from the house. Lightly they conversed; with animation, with spirit and with feeling. The lady of Pescara

naturally assumed to herself the principal portion of every argument; but Maurice Tilton strove, and that not unsuccessfully, to maintain the bantering style which she had adopted. Hilda was an attentive, but, in general, a silent, listener to them both. To both she appeared to listen with almost equal interest. 'Tis true that, when the Marchioness made any observation which she deemed peculiarly happy, a gentle pressure from the hand by which Hilda clasped her arm, showed that she participated in the slight intellectual triumph of her friend: but these signs of partisanship may, perhaps, be thought to have been counterbalanced by the downcast, yet beaming, eyes, and the placid, cheerful, smile that dimpled those roseate lips and that graceful chin, whenever Maurice replied to the happy sally, by an answer or an illustration still more happy. Calm, sweet, and unacknowledged, even to herself, was the new-found satisfaction which the fair girl received from that sprightly walk: and the

evident pleasure which each one of the party thus bestowed upon the others, animated and excited each to a liveliness, elasticity and sprightliness of tone, than which nothing in human society is more delightful.

The happy feelings in which all three participated were, however, destined to receive an unexpected check. They had, hitherto, as we have said, paced the walks nearest to the walls of the monastery. Emboldened, however, by the bracing coolness of the morning air, and rendered thoughtless by the animation of the dialogue in which they had indulged, they now descended a more rugged path which wound aslant down the steep side of the neighbouring precipice. Trees still overshadowed them, and low brushwood clothed the sides of the hill. After descending a short way, a still narrower, and, evidently, less frequented, road branched off from the one they had hitherto followed, and, turning to the left, gradually conducted them again to the summit of the cliff—though at the

distance of a quarter of a mile from the abbey. Thus, in the midst of an animated discussion on general literature and the fine arts, they suddenly found themselves on a small platform, raised somewhat above the immediately surrounding landscape, and affording them an extended view on all sides, excepting that on which it was bounded by the table hill on which the monastery was seated. An open door-way, formed in rude masonry and overhung by ivy and creeping plants, opened upon this platform; and, in front of it, was seated, upon a log of wood, a man, passed, indeed, the prime of life, but whose long beard being superadded to the usual dress of the adjoining Dominican monks, gave him the appearance of being much older than he really was. The two ladies and Maurice started, as, on turning a corner of the cliff, they first beheld this unexpected figure. The Marchesa, however, immediately advanced towards him.

“Have I the advantage,” she enquired, as

she asked for his blessing, "have I the advantage of speaking to Padre Anselmo, of whom I have heard so much since I came into the monastery?"

"What have you heard?" enquired the hermit, in a rough, abrupt tone of voice, and with a manner totally devoid of suavity or deference.

"What have I heard?" repeated the lady, unabashed by the rudeness of the enquiry. "I have heard that Father Anselmo is a great, and good, and kind man, though he wishes to be thought less amiable than he really is; and I have heard that nothing occurs, or can occur, without his sanction; or, at least, without his being forewarned of it."

"Then you have heard a vast deal of nonsense. Do you believe the absurdities which you repeat?" asked the stranger.

"Believe them? No: most assuredly I do not," replied the lady, rather piqued. "I may believe that you are a good and pious

man, although you do not waste your words in phrases of mere politeness : but I certainly do not believe that you foretell what is about to happen, any better than other people."

"Then you are quite wrong, again, lady," growled the old man, "as you may one day find out. Aye, you, and that pale-faced child there, will both think of me when you are led captives at the order of one whom you most despise."

"What mean you, holy father?" timidly enquired Hilda. "Heed not the Marchesa's repartee. She was only piqued by your manner. I, myself, fully believe in the power which good people, at times, possess ; and, you, yourself, dear Vittoria, surely remember the supernatural warning which the Marquis received before the capture of Milan ?"

"Supernatural nonsense !" retorted the hermit, with a grim smile. "Why, it was I, myself, who appeared disguised before the Marquis and the Cardinal Giulio of Medicis—he was a military knight then, he is Pope now—I,

myself, appeared before them, and told them that, if they would instantly attack the town, the great bell of the Duomo would ring, and the gates be opened to them. And you think that the effect of supernatural information, do you? Poor child, what nonsense people will believe! Why, I had been sent by the Pope's friends in the city to give this intelligence to the allies. I gave it mysteriously, in order that I might gain access to their tent; but I never knew, till now, that people fancied I had been a supernatural agent."

"Then you do not profess to have prophetic powers?" enquired the Marchesa.

"I do not profess any thing, except a wish to live here in peace and quiet. But if silly people will come and ask me questions, I must answer them according to the information I possess. Now, I suppose you are come to ask the fate of the battle that is expected out yonder? Can I help telling you that the French have been beaten, and driven beyond the river Sessia?"

“Holy Father Anselmo!” cried Hilda, “then you have the power you disclaim. But how—pray how is the Marquis?” she anxiously added.

“Whatever I might reply, fair child, would have no effect or influence on the Marchioness, as she has just told us. I have, however, no doubt but that he will do—for the present:—his time is not come yet.”

“Cruel old man; what mean you?” exclaimed the Marchesa, bursting into a flood of tears.

“Nothing, nothing, dear lady,” replied the hermit, in an altered tone. “Forgive me, I pray you. It was only the annoyance which I felt at your incredulity respecting my powers which prompted me to revenge myself on you. Be assured I lament my weakness and my sin, now I see the effect it has produced. I only meant to hint that the constant warfare in which the Marquis takes so prominent a part, must expose him to great danger. No one, dear lady, shall, henceforward, pray more

earnestly than I, that he may not succumb. Will you deign to forgive me my harshness?"

The poor woman still wept so violently, over the danger which had been threatened against the husband, that she was unable to reply to the old man's humble supplication for forgiveness. Maurice Tilton, however, interposed:

"You have explained, Sir," he said, "your cruel observation on the Marquis of Pescara. You have, however, permitted yourself other allusions which must not pass unheeded. Who and what are you?"

"You do right, young man," replied the now thoroughly humbled Anselmo, "You do right to punish me for my presumption. Let me shew my contrition by literally replying to your question of who and what I am. May I thus remove any unpleasant impression which my foolish speech may have left upon your minds!

"My natural disposition," he continued, "led me to prefer the life of a soldier: my

condition in the world made me well satisfied with the pay and profits of a common trooper. In strife, violence, and sin, my youth and much of my manhood passed away. Occasionally, I projected a change of habits ; but some new division of booty would ever happen to afford me renewed means of gratifying my passions, and binding me more firmly to them. I was in the dreadful battle of Ravenna ; I there fought with the troops of the church : I am, indeed, by birth a Roman. I was wounded and left for dead on the field. The past, and the dreadful future, then rushed upon mind. I vowed amendment, should I be saved for the present from the jaws of hell. I raved, I absolutely raved in despair, that no minister of God was at hand to receive my confession. ‘ But no, so it ever is,’ I wildly cried, ‘ with those cursed clergy—foremost in every festival, instigating to every broil and war, they always skulk into their churches and their convents when they are most needed !’ In the midst of my madness, a noble figure rose

up near me. I turned and saw the Papal legate, Giovanni of Medicis, who was afterwards Pope Leo X. I saw this great man rise from the side of a wounded trooper to whom he had been administering spiritual consolation. Unarmed and defenceless in the midst of the battle, he had often encouraged us to withstand the dreadful attacks of the French; now, when our force was routed and driven from the ground, he still lingered behind to assist the dying.

“‘What is it, my poor friend?’ he gently said to me, as he kneeled on one knee, at my head; ‘thou callest for a priest. God, in his mercy, sends thee one. If thou art repentant, confess thy sins, and hope in his goodness.’

“I did so, lady; with tears and sorrow I did confess me, and promise amendment should my life be spared. I wept, perhaps as much at the goodness of the great Cardinal as at the mercy of God. But I did weep, lady. It is always good to weep. His Emi-

nence had but just given me his priestly absolution when the Chevalier Pietase, of Bologna, galloped suddenly up:

“‘Save yourself, Eminence,’ he cried. ‘You will fall into the hands of the enemy; take my horse and fly. I can easily catch another.’”

“‘My son,’ replied the Cardinal, ‘as war has produced these results, this is the proper place for the priest who witnesses them. Go; leave me to my duty.’”

“I saw him bend over another dying soldier; but at that moment he was rudely seized upon by two horsemen, who were proceeding to treat him with indignity, when he was rescued from them by the interference of the same gallant knight who had before urged him to flight. I saw him, soon after, taken prisoner by a body of French cavalry. Loss of blood had so much weakened me that I fainted where I lay.

“Forgive, lady,” continued the hermit, “forgive me if my story is tedious. I recount

it as a penance to myself ; but I would not willingly inflict one on you."

Our two heroines both anxiously pressed the old man to continue the history of his conversion.

"Slowly, lady," he proceeded, "slowly I returned to life, and strength—without which there is no real life. In a penitential spirit, and firmly resolved to act upon the resolution which I had formed on the field of Ravenna, I made my way to Rome. There, misery awaited me. A daughter, a young child to whom, alone, on the wide earth I was passionately attached, had disappeared from the charge of the people with whom I had left her. The house had been pillaged in one of the frequent contests between the Colonna and the Orsini, and my little lass had not, since, been heard of. But too many reasons were given to make me believe that she had been slain in the fray, and her little body cast into the huge cistern in the centre of the court-yard of the house. Sick at heart, I re-

joined my troop for a while, but I soon left it again, and wandered for some years as a pilgrim through the different states of Italy. At all the most holy shrines, I offered up my prayers to God for pardon to myself, for I had sinned again, lady ; grievously sinned again ; and for the recovery of my child if she were still in life. Two years since, returning from a pilgrimage to Mount Varese, I was kindly refreshed at this monastery. You have called me Father Anselmo ; I am no padre. God knows that, with the mighty sin upon my conscience, I am not worthy to take any vows. I am too wandering in my habits—too madly urged by inward guilt ever to bind myself to reside in any fixed place. The good monks, however, made allowance for my failings, in consideration of my wish to correct them, and that they do not know all that I have done. I made a prayer to the Abbot that I might be permitted to enclose this cavern and to reside in it. This he kindly allowed. I attend the services in the abbey ; but am no further a

monk than that I wear something of the habit."

"Your story has much interested me," said the Marchesa, kindly. "You mentioned that your child had suffered in a fray between the Colonna and the Orsini. In the house of which family did she live?"

"In one of the Colonna palaces, lady," replied the old man. "The persons with whom I had placed her lived in a couple of rooms in the house, such as the Italian nobles are wont to let out to their dependents."

"But," remarked Tilton, interposing, "you have told us your history, Signor Anselmo, but you have not told us the meaning of those pretensions to prophecy which you made when we first spoke to you, and of which it seemed that the Signora Marchesa had before heard some rumour."

"That, Signor, is but a venial sin, of which I own that I have been guilty, and of which I might strive to correct myself, were it my only one. In the busy life which I have led,

in the ten years, particularly, which I have spent in wandering through Italy, excepting the time which I again spent with that cursed Maldonato, I have naturally seen much, and have acquired the habit of observing much which escapes the notice of those who are differently constituted. By detailing information which I had thus obtained, and by concealing the source whence I derived it, I have often astonished the minds of the curious and the ignorant. Signor, when a man has that within him which tells him that he is a devil, he is glad to be told by others that he is a god. I had a devil within me; I have a devil within me now; he tells me of what I have done, and jeers me that it is too horrible to be forgiven; he bids me hug my secret sin, and never, by confessing it, brand myself as..... But ha! ha!" he cried, wildly interrupting himself; "dost think, Signor, that I shall tell it to thee? No; no; I may tell the future, but not the past—not the past. And so I do tell the future to many silly

people," he resumed, after a pause: "I tell them what is most likely to happen, and they consider me a prophet—almost a god. I do wrong, lady, I know, but it is only a slight sin for one who has served Colonel Maldonato. Besides, I never allow any one to leave me without assuring them that I derive my knowledge from natural causes; but they do not believe that—they think me a prophet; Ha! ha!"

"And pray," enquired Tilton, anxiously, "what is the real meaning of those dark hints you threw out respecting the captivity of these ladies?"

"I know not, Signor. Last evening, soon after the alarum bell in the convent tower had ceased to ring, a party of Spanish troopers passed near my cell as they descended the cliff. They saw not me: but I gathered from their talk to one another that they had been thwarted in their attempt to obtain some prize; and one who appeared to be a leader and who came last, and whom I had good

cause to recognise as Colonel Maldonato, my curse on him ! spoke with great violence to his comrade, and, in broken sentences, vowed vengeance upon those who had thwarted him. His words were intermixed with curses and with admiration of some lady whom he appeared to have met in the abbey. ‘If I die in the attempt,’ these were the last words I was able to hear, ‘if I die for it, I will get them both into my power.’ I meant, Signor, to have warned you of this before we should part; but my foolish words to that lady alarmed her, and turned our discourse.”

“ You did not overhear more ? ” enquired the Englishman.

“ Not a word distinctly, Signor ; but, indeed, ladies,” the hermit added, turning to them, “ you have little to fear. No soldier now dare insult those who have taken protection in a convent. Since the sack of Ravenna, of which I have before spoken, when, as I have been informed, the French General seized thirty-four of his own soldiers who had

broken into a convent and instantly hung them out of the windows as warnings to the others—since that time, the religious houses have been generally respected.”

“ Let me ask what you meant,” enquired the Marchesa, “ by saying that the French had been driven back this morning. We have not received any advices of a battle.”

“ No, Lady ; but in the silence of this elevated hermitage, I was able to hear the sound of the artillery in the direction of the Sessia ; and as it did not cease, but became indistinct owing to the increasing distance, I imagined that the Imperialists had attacked the French Admiral Bonnivet, and had driven him further into the mountains. I was still listening to the firing when you first addressed me ; and this interruption was one cause of the abruptness of my mode of speech.”

On receiving this matter of fact explanation of those statements and denunciations which had before appeared so astounding, our friends, if we may be permitted to call

them so, turned to leave the platform of the hermitage.

“Farewell, ladies,” cried the hermit, “while something of his old temper again came over him; Farewell, heaven defend you against all those dangers which, most assuredly, menace you. Pardon me that I announced them so abruptly; but, rely upon it, they will prove to be not imaginary.—Farewell, Signor;” he continued, addressing Tilton. “We may meet again. You now think yourself far superior to the mad hermit of Monto-Verde: we may meet again: the course of love is not so smooth as lovers always imagine—particularly when they love—they know not whom. I know. I could tell: but I will not now. No, no; Fra Giovanni, I can keep a secret, and help my child to a noble husband; I can keep a secret—particularly when my powers and foreknowledge are contemned. Aye? start you, fair Sir? You should have spoken to me more civilly before. I will never tell ye who she is — till thou hast

wedded her—then how the poor trooper, then how the poor mad hermit, will triumph ! "Twill be a brave wedding ! till then, farewell ! farewell thou, too, my child."

He turned him and entered his low browed cell.

"The poor fellow's intellect," observed Tilton, as they descended the path, "has been evidently disturbed by wounds received in that battle. Pray, dear Donna Vittoria, do not attach any importance to his rude ravings."

"I will not," replied the Marchioness ; "and yet I cannot but admit that his account of the battle and of the conduct of the Cardinal John of Medici is perfectly true : nor can I the less conceal from myself that the fate he foretold for Ferdinand is most likely to overtake him, if he follow on in his present pursuits. God help me ! God help me ! I can scarcely say, God's will be done !"

Hilda fondly tried to console her friend ; and thus in silence and dread of threatened

dangers against the annunciation of which they vainly strove to harden themselves, they slowly returned to the monastery. How different were their present feelings from those with which they had left it two hours before !

CHAPTER VIII.

PRODIGIES.

“ Then on the battlement they saw
 A vision passing nature's law,
 Strange, wild, and dimly seen ;
 Figures that seemed to rise and die,
 Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
 While nought confirmed could ear or eye
 Discern of sound or mien.”

SCOTT'S *MARMION*.

It will easily be supposed that, in the wavering state of his feelings towards Hilda, Tilton could not hear, without deep interest, of the dark threats and unintelligible hints which Anselmo had pronounced against her. Long did he pace the floor of his apartment, picturing to himself all the dangers to which she might be exposed by the unbridled violence of

such a man as Colonel Maldonato ; for that he was the unseen person, who had used the threatening language, there could not be a doubt. In the division of interests and the balanced state of parties which then afflicted Italy, no restraint could check the license which every *condottiere*, or commander of mercenary troops enlisted for the time under his banner, exercised wherever his power extended. Tilton well knew that Maldonato had brought a large body of Spaniards to the service of the duke of Urbino, the leader of the Italian allies, and was, therefore, too powerful for a stranger to attempt any thing against him without the clearest proofs of his treachery. The Spaniard had, indeed, committed himself by attempting to arrest the duke of Bourbon, who, he must have well known, was endeavouring to join the Imperialists, with whom he himself then served ; but the Duke was not likely to bring dissension into the camp at that critical moment, in order to punish the daring attempt of an individual upon his personal freedom.

From the Marquis of Pescara, indeed, Maurice Tilton might be certain of obtaining every protection for his wife and her friend ; but he felt that he could scarcely apply to him against a powerful leader on no better evidence than the doubtful statement of a half-crazed enthusiast.

The conclusion, to which the conflicting judgment and wish of the Englishman led him, was the same as that usually arrived at when inclination, anxiety, and insuperable difficulties contend for mastery in the stunned mind ; he suffered his thoughts to escape from the perplexities in which they were involved, by allowing fancy to supersede them and present more soothing and attractive images.

The image of the fair-haired Hilda thus gradually attained full possession of his mind. Those personal perfections which had been matured and developed since he had last seen her, sweetly harmonized with the gentle and amiable disposition which he remembered her to have possessed, and which all that he had

observed in her, for the last twelve hours, proved to be her unaltered attribute. Nor could he, instructed beyond the habits of those of his years in the study of the human heart and all those slightest symptoms which may betray its inward workings—be heedless to the interest which this timid girl had inadvertently betrayed in his own proceedings. The exhibition of the sentiments with which she had first welcomed him in the convent had, indeed, been restrained within the usual boundaries of pleasurable surprise; but the manner in which she had drawn towards him for protection on the irruption of Maldonato, the exclamation with which she had received the intelligence that he did not intend to accompany his friend to the expected engagement—these, and many other symptoms of interest which she had exhibited towards him, had not been unmarked by Tilton; and would have been too flattering to his vanity not to have produced some impression, even had he not been predisposed to hail with delight every

sign of her favourable dispositions towards him.

Yet we will not say that Sir Maurice Tilton loved Hilda Colonna. He felt a deep interest in her from old associations ; a deep admiration on account of her fairy and beauteous person ; a delighted vanity at the symptoms of concern in his welfare, and of trust in his protection, which she had unwittingly exhibited towards him : these sentiments, when combined, approximate, we admit, to incipient love. But, as yet, the love was only incipient. " Who is she ? " was the question which constantly presented itself to his mind—which constantly chilled all his more fervent aspirations towards her.

" That old fool in the cavern," thought Tilton, " appeared to know something on the subject. But, besides that it would be unhandsome to attempt to discover, through such an one as he, the secrets of d'Avalos family ; the crazy mountebank is evidently offended with the manner in which I resented

his would-be prophecies ; and will never condescend to hold friendly intercourse with me. Fool that I was ! Had I humoured him when in his repentant mood, I might have led him to tell every thing. But now—now the Marchesa,” he continued, adopting a sudden determination, “ will, perhaps, be able to disclose to me all I wish to know. I will hie to her, and frankly interrogate her.”

So engrossed had Maurice Tilton been by his own thoughts that he had not perceived how many hours had sped away since he had separated from the Marchesa and Hilda Colonna, after their eventful walk in the morning. As he now strode through the court-yard with the resolution of instantly acting up to his determination, and discovering the real origin of the fair girl in whom he could not disguise to himself that he was deeply interested, Bartolomeo, the Major-Duomo, met him, and informed him that the ladies and the Abbot had already entered the dinner hall and had enquired anxiously after him.

“Dinner already !” cried Tilton in surprise ;
 “ why we have but just broken our fast.”

“ La scusi,” replied the self-important functionary ; “ your Excellency breakfasted early, and it is now two hours after mid-day. But when the mind is occupied on pleasant subjects,” he added half deferentially, half sarcastically, “ it notes not now fleetly the hours speed away.”

Tilton eyed him with an enquiring glance. It was evident that he knew something, perhaps suspected more, of the state of his mind : but even had the hour permitted him to delay, the young man could not have condescended to enter into conversation even with a trusty servant, on the subject of his own feelings, or the private history of a member of the high family whom Bartolomeo served. Had he known that even the old porter Fra Giovanni had read, in his first glance, the interest with which the lady Hilda inspired him, Maurice Tilton would not have marvelled to discover that the state of his affections was no secret to the all-observant Bartolomeo.

As Tilton entered the dining-hall, he composed his mind and his features to their usual unruffled cast, and blandly apologised to the Abbot and to the ladies for the lateness of his appearance. The conversation of the party was calm, but not without restraint. Each of the three strangers was pre-occupied by the threats and insinuations of the hermit; which that worthy's subsequent confession and explanations had not entirely effaced. The Abbot alone was calm and benevolent as usual: he knew nothing of the incidental meeting to which his guests had been exposed in the morning; and expressed much regret when informed of the annoyance they had endured.

“I scarcely know what to do with the poor man,” he observed in continuation. “When he came here, it was evident that his intellect had been shaken by wounds or sorrows that he had endured: — probably the effect of the former caused him to magnify in imagination the greatness of the latter. At all events, as he declared himself penitent for whatever the past might have concealed, and prayed only

for peace and tranquillity, and for leave to spend his days in this neighbourhood, I thought that his mind might be brought to a firmer tone by yielding to his wish. Still, at times, I am tempted to regret that I have afforded him the shelter of our woods."

"Does he ever seriously abuse your confidence?" enquired Tilton.

"I have little to complain of," replied the Abbot, "beyond the pretensions to supernatural knowledge which he often puts forth. He has observed much during his wanderings, and possesses an unfailing memory: by employing these faculties, he often practises upon the credulity of the peasantry to such an extent that we have difficulty in counteracting the superstitious faith which his prophecies engender."

"He attempted to arouse a similar faith in us this morning; but he afterwards prayed forgiveness, and appeared sincerely to repent him," observed the Marchesa.

"And told you all his history, I doubt not?"

enquired the Abbot. "That is the usual course of his wild fancy when his prognostications have seriously grieved those to whom they are addressed. I am much pained to gather, from his having followed this course with you, that he permitted himself to utter rhapsodies which could distress either of your party. The worst of the matter, however, is that his repentance is only momentary: on the first provocation, or the first opportunity of displaying his fancied lore, he immediately forgets every good resolve, and re-enacts his prophetic part with as much violence as ever."

"So it appeared in my case," said Tilton. "But may I ask your Reverence whether the account which he gives of himself in his honest moments, if such he really have, be true?"

"I firmly believe it to be so," replied the Abbot. "I doubt not but that he gave you many details of the battle of Ravenna, and of the kindness he met with from the Cardinal of Medici—afterwards Leo the Tenth. That

his Holiness did act in that manner is a fact. But from some hints which, in his wildest moments, this poor fellow throws out, I fear that, at some subsequent period, he must have ill requited the attention of the pontiff."

"He!" exclaimed Tilton; "what intercourse could possibly exist thenceforward between this mad trooper and one so exalted as Leo the Tenth?"

"I know not;" responded the Abbot, thoughtfully: "but I have my suspicions that he was not always so bent down by sorrow as he represents himself to have been after his recovery from his wounds. From expressions which have, at times, dropt from him, I fear that he again joined his commander, this Colonel Maldonato who annoyed us all last night; and that, while in his service, some great crime was committed, the dread and remembrance of which has ever since acted upon his previously shattered and excited intellect. I know not; I pray that I may be mistaken: but I wish it were con-

sistent with Christian charity for me to expel him from the neighbourhood of my monastery."

There was a pause in the conversation, each one of the party being engrossed with his own thoughts as they had been excited by the hermit Anselmo. The silence had continued a few minutes when the door of the hall was flung rudely open, and Anselmo himself rushed in, with wild and distracted looks and gestures, followed by the old porter, Fra Giovanni, who shrieked out, at the highest pitch of his cracked voice,

"Dio mio! Dio mio! What will become of us? what will become of us? Save me, holy Abbot! for the sake of the Blessed Virgin and St. Domenic, save us!—save us!"

"Save us!" cried the hermit, in loud and fearful accents of mingled sarcasm, pride, and despair. "Save ye, dost say, old fool! none can save ye. No one can save us! I knew it—I foretold it.—It is all owing to my crime. Absolution, holy Abbot! give me absolution. I must ask for it, at last!"

He cast himself on his knees at the feet of the astounded Abbot.

“There ! see—see—there it is again,” cried old Giovanni—“merciful heaven, what will happen to us !”

“Absolution,” loudly expostulated the Hermit, crawling on his knees after the Abbot, who had hastened to the oriel window from which all the rest now gazed in terror and surprise. “I demand absolution. The end of the world is come. My crime occasioned it all. ’Twas I who poisoned him.”

“Oh, holy father,” shrieked Fra Giovanni, also falling on his knees, “stop it, stop it. Bless it, exorcise it, curse it. Order out the holy relics and make a procession. Dio mio, Dio mio, I wish I had not told Bartolomeo so many lies ; nor left the door open ; nor broken my fast last Friday. I will confess, I will confess it all.”

“It is, indeed, a fearful sight !” exclaimed the Abbot. “But do not be alarmed, ladies, although we cannot understand it.”

The ladies and Tilton, could not, however, help feeling alarmed; although they spoke not in answer to the Abbot's attempted reassurances. They stood gazing, fixed and silently, on the portentous spectacle which the clouded sky presented to them. A thick forest was imaged in the quarter of the heavens on which they gazed; and out of this issued several battalions of foot soldiers, each of which seemed to contain, at least, ten thousand men; each battalion being supported by a troop of at least one thousand men at arms. Amongst these, advanced such mighty pieces of ordnance as not even Charles the Eighth had ever imported into Italy. Scarce was this mighty army ranged in battle array, when, from the opposite side advanced an opposing force of equal power. The different leaders met and consulted together; kings, with crowns on their heads, joined in the conference. At length, one mighty form, and to whom all the flickering shadows bent down with the greatest reverence

* * * *

“Who can it be?” shrieked Fra Giovanni, with his eyes starting from their sockets, at this period of the awful pantomime.

“Who?” bellowed the mad hermit, on his knees. “I know him well. The Pope! The Pope! My benefactor! Absolution, abbot, absolution!”

The Abbot moved aside, to escape his convulsed grasp, and to mark, in silence, the progress of the threatening appearance.

The mighty shadow we have mentioned now advanced before all the rest; and meeting one of the opposing kings, drew its gauntlet from its right hand, and cast it high in air. Instantly trumpets sounded in the heavens, the hostile squadron met, the cannon thundered.

“*I will* be absolved. I tell thee, before the world crumble into ruins,” exclaimed the madman on his knees, dragging the abbot into a seat beside him. “I have a right to be absolved. I have confessed my crime. *Mea culpa, mea*

culpa : though it was not so much my fault. The colonel ordered it ; and the Duke of Urbino set him to the work. But each one for himself. I confess and I demand absolution.”

Several monks now rushed into the room ; and, seizing the maniac, released the terrified abbot from his clutches. They, at the same time, all spoke together their fears respecting the awful prodigy ; and summoned their superior to lead them to the chapel, that they might together deprecate the wrath of heaven. Willingly the abbot rose to accompany them ; but, gazing from the window, perceived, with astonishment, that the sun again shone serenely ; that the figures had disappeared ; that not a trace remained of the awful pantomime which had so alarmed all beholders.

“ Blessed be God,” devoutly exclaimed the abbot, “ for all his mercy. Let us, my brethren, to the chapel, to praise Him together for his infinite goodness.” At the head of the monks, he led the way from the hall. The mad

Anselmo rushed from the room exclaiming,

“Pray! pray! But it is not over yet. Heaven will never be appeased till I am absolved.”*

* Guicciardini records, that an appearance in the heavens, such as we have described, was first witnessed in Italy at this period.

CHAPTER IX.

LOVE AND PRIDE.

“Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end,
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?”
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

THE prayers were ended. The sky was serene. Each one in the monastery had retired to his own apartment. Search had been made, by order of the abbot, for the hermit Anselmo: he was nowhere to be found. Tilton had wandered awhile to compose his mind, after the alarming phenomenon all had witnessed, and which, though of a kind more frequent in the South of Europe since the commencement of the last century, had never before been ob-

served at the period of our history. The astonishment and alarm it created in those who happened to witness it may, therefore, be easily imagined. Those who did not personally behold it, at once denied the evidence of those who did, and declared their tale to be incredible, and the creation of their own fancies. Thus are the assertions of travellers, and of those who first originate discoveries in the arts and sciences, often decried as falsehoods and impossibilities: although the advance of knowledge and of accurate research as often proves the truth of the original assertions.

Thus too is the world now no longer astonished by those beautiful effects of reflected and refracted light which filled our predecessors with wonder and alarm.

Still bent upon carrying out the resolution he had adopted in the morning of enquiring from the Marchesa of Pescara what was the real origin of Hilda, our friend Tilton now sought the apartment in which he was in-

formed that the lady would gladly receive his visit.

“What think you, dear chevalier,” said the Marchesa, as he entered the room, “now that dear Hilda is not here to be alarmed by the expression of your opinion, what do you really think of the awful spectacle we have witnessed?”

“Dear Madonna Vittoria,” replied the Englishman, “I know not what to think. I cannot believe, with the crazy hermit, that the whole pageant referred to himself; although I doubt not that he has committed the awful crime of which he madly accuses himself. I fear it rather portends general wars and disasters amongst Christian nations.”

“Who, then,” enquired the lady, “could that mighty figure be whom the hermit declared to be the Pope?”

“I should rather imagine it to represent the Emperor. He is now, doubtless, the first Sovereign in the world; and the enmity and jealousy which exist between him and the king

of France certainly betoken much distress to all the nations."

The lady was silent and appeared buried in her own anxious reflections.

"Fear not, cara Madonna," continued Tilton more cheeringly: "whatever wars may be foretold in this way, they cannot concern us farther than that they will give the Marquis continued opportunities of winning the admiration of Europe, and afford me constant occasions of mediating and treating where, fortunately for my love of diplomatic procrastination, neither treaty nor mediation will be of any avail."

"Such times will just suit your chivalrous young friend," observed the Marchioness with a smile.

"Exactly," replied Tilton. "You must not, however, suppose that he follows war for war's sake. While his father disowns him, it is perforce his profession. He cannot help himself. Permit me now, however, bella Marchesa, to speak to you as an old friend of an old friend.

You have never told me who is the fair girl who bears your name. Yet I believe she is not a member of your family—she is not really a Colonna?"

"Per esempio!" exclaimed the Marchesa. "And what importance can it be to the Cavelliere Maurizio Tilton of England, whether my little Hilda be my first cousin or not?"

"Make allowance," urged Tilton, "for the curiosity which beauty, such as hers, must excite in one who has known her so long as I have."

"Do you ask then on account of her beauty, or on account of the antiquity of your acquaintance?"

"For both reasons, do not deny me, dear lady."

"Oh, you wish to know whether your long enduring acquaintance and friendship has not been misplaced?"

"Never," protested Tilton: "it could not be misplaced while centered on Hilda, on a friend of yours."

"Then you are only curious to ascertain," said the Marchesa in a bantering tone, "whether nature have not misplaced its fairest gift of beauty by bestowing it on one of unknown birth?"

"You are too hard upon me, per Bacco! as you Romans say," exclaimed Tilton.

"Nay, nay," said Donna Vittoria; "I merely wish you to ask yourself how much importance you ought really and truly, as a rational man, which all you Englishmen consider yourselves, to attach to the family and parentage of a young girl whom you have known from childhood to be endowed with every charm of mind and temper, and whom you now perceive to possess every grace of person."

"But surely a Colonna," said Tilton, "would not deny the advantages of high birth?"

"No," said the lady with increased animation; "I would not, in a land where that high birth is known and has its proper weight. But of what importance to a stranger, merely

travelling in the country, can be the birth and family of a young girl whom he admires for every attribute that should adorn a woman?"

"I am no passing stranger," said Tilton, piqued by her manner of refusing the information he pleaded for; "I would wish to be no passing stranger in regard to the fair Hilda: but Maurice Tilton must know somewhat of the real family of her whom he would think of as his wife."

"Victory! victory!" exclaimed the Marchesa; "I have driven the great diplomatist, who comes amongst us in disguise and bent on all important and all secret missions, to betray the real object of all his enquiries. I have compelled him to speak out for once before he intended to do so!"

"Who could resist the practices of Madonna Vittoria?" said Tilton, vainly endeavouring to conceal the little annoyance he felt at having committed himself. "Diplomacy can never be successfully employed against one who rifles all hearts at her pleasure."

"Excepting," gaily added the Marchesa, "excepting those hearts which have already been rifled by her friends. But now," she continued changing her tone, "now that you have shown me that you are not prompted by mere curiosity, I will reply to you in a different strain. I know not who Hilda Colonna really is."

"Is that possible!" exclaimed Tilton.

"Most certain," replied the Marchesa. "I may have my suspicions; those suspicions may have been very lately strengthened. But I will not be the means of occasioning possible disappointment by prematurely declaring them."

"At least say if she be entitled to the name she bear?"

"I cannot. I believe her to be related to the Colonna family; but I have no sufficient assurance of the fact to induce me to urge it upon you."

"Do you believe her to be well born?"

"I do."

“May I enquire how your intimacy first commenced?”

“No, Tilton, you may not. I was a child when she was an infant. My father gave her to me as a companion and a play-fellow. We have grown up together. She is now my dear friend.”

“Was your father aware of the circumstances of the playmate he allotted to you?”

“Not with certainty. He knew no more than I myself now do. Before his death, he informed me of all that he had learned. But both he and I may have been imposed upon; and I will not be the means of raising hopes in you that may prove delusive. Poor Hilda is, I believe, aware of her uncertain position in life; and will, I fear, dedicate herself to a cloister, to escape from it.”

“Hilda become a nun!” exclaimed Tilton.

“Yes, I attribute to her friendship for me that she has not already taken the veil. She has a sweet, calm, cheerful disposition, which

would, I believe, render her happy in the cloister."

"Impossible. This must not be," asserted the Englishman.

"I will tell you frankly," said the Marchesa smiling, "that I think you have the power to prevent it. A woman can always see into a woman's heart; and Hilda's behaviour towards you, since you came here last evening, has not been unobserved by me."

"Do you really think she loves me?" asked Tilton delighted.

"Loves you! No: conceited stranger! Dost think an Italian girl, brought up as Hilda has been, would love any one before she has been asked by him to do so in return for his plighted faith? No: but I think Hilda is very well inclined towards you, and would be glad to love you were she entitled to do so. And believe me, Maurice," she continued with earnestness, "that never was a truer prize offered to the ambition of man than the heart of Hilda Colonna. Her whole

affection centres in quiet domestic pursuits. She may not be endowed with brilliant talents; but she possesses a sweetness of temper, a calm rectitude of judgment, and an affectionate disposition, which will secure the happiness of any man on whom her affections are placed; and Hilda will never wed one who does not command her best affections."

A strange fancy suddenly crossed Tilton's mind, that the unknown Hilda was, in fact, the long lost daughter of the raving hermit. "Speak not, bella Marchesa," he gallantly said, in an altered tone, "against brilliant talents, as though they were necessarily a bar to happiness. You yourself and D'Avalos at once disprove the calumny."

"I said not that they were necessarily a bar to happiness," replied the Marchesa, mortified that Tilton had thus unaccountably turned the conversation away from her friend. "But Ferdinand and I were peculiarly circumstanced. We were contracted to one another in our cradles so to say:--we grew up toge-

ther, to love one another, and to confide in one another ; and, what was most essential to the happiness of our union, we were able to esteem and admire one another. Not only did the handsome person of D'Avalos mark him out for my admiration, but the brilliant talents he displayed secured my respect, soothed my vanity, and made me proud of him. There could not be anything common-place in our union. Ferdinand has a depth of feeling and a natural enthusiasm which must always preserve warm and animated the sentiments of those who associate with him. His thoughts and feelings are as fresh and buoyant as those of your young friend, de Whittingham."

"I fear de Whittingham is rather too romantic," said the worldly-minded Tilton. "He should have lived in the days of the troubadours, when, if he had not taken the viol himself, he would have at least afforded fitting themes to employ the talent of those chroniclers of the deeds of chivalry."

"Fear not for your friend," replied the

Marchesa. "Depend upon it that an excess of enthusiasm is the greatest blessing with which one can start on the journey of life. It but wears away too soon ; or it is rather more generally frittered away willingly on the inanities and puerilities of what are called the real interests of life."

The lady spoke rather bitterly ; for she could scarcely disguise the annoyance she felt at the levity with which Tilton had turned the conversation from the first subject of his enquiries, her dear friend. Her old opinion of the mere worldliness of his character was thus confirmed within her ; and although she lamented and despised the materialism, if the expression may be permitted, of his pursuits, yet was she herself so much a woman of the world as to be aware that a man of his station, who possessed the common fund of probity and honour, and was stained by no prominent vice, as he was adorned by no prominent virtue, afforded to her whom he should wed all those prospects of happi-

ness that are anticipated or hoped for in nine hundred and ninety-nine unions out of one thousand of those which are celebrated with the greatest approbation and rejoicing of parents and kinsfolk. As a woman of the world, therefore, she had rejoiced to see him return the predisposition of her friend towards him, and was proportionally annoyed at the anxiety he had exhibited to turn the conversation into another channel, lest he should be led to commit himself.

Their talk was soon interrupted by frequent pauses; and, at length, on Hilda's entering the room, Tilton arose; and with polite phrases and ready gallantry, took his leave, and returned to his own cell.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEATH.

“ Oh ! Thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee !
The friends who in our sunshine live,
When winter comes, are flown ;
And he who has but tears to give
Must weep those tears alone.
But Thou wilt heal the broken heart
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

MOORE.

It is time that we follow our hero, Warren de Whittingham, who, the Reader will recollect, had left the monastery in the company, and with the troop, of the Chevalier Bayard, enthusiastically anxious to draw his sword, for the first time in a general engagement, under the eye

of so renowned a knight. We doubt whether it may be necessary to remind the Reader of the position of the armies in whose movements we must, for a short space, bespeak his interest. In our uncertainty, therefore, as to the stock of his historical, local, and particular information, we will, in a few lines, endeavour to place the state of the war before him.

The Admiral Bonnivet, the commander of the French forces, had, as we have said, been expelled from his fortified camp of Biagrassa. With a disorganized, because an unpaid, army, he had been gradually driven from Novara, and up the valley of the Ticino river. A party of six thousand Swiss who had been sent to reinforce him, tarried, for causes best known to themselves, at a few miles' distance on the right bank of the river Sessia. These it was his anxious object to join. Meanwhile, the Imperialist and allied forces pressed at different intervals on his rear, in the hope either of annihilating his remnant of

an army ere he should effect an union with the fresh recruits, or, if that were impossible, of driving the whole force beyond the frontier, and thus effectually depriving the few towns in the Milanese, which still held out for the French, of any prospect of future assistance.

The valley along which the French army had retreated was so thronged by different parties of detached Imperialists that Bayard was obliged to conduct his small troop across the higher grounds, so as to avoid, as much as possible, all engagements with the straggling, but yet constantly advancing, bodies of the enemy. Arrived at the river Sessia, he forded it near the village of Romagnana; and beheld, from a height, the rude bridge which Bonnivet had hastily cast over the swollen torrent the evening before, and over which he had safely conducted his numerous train of artillery. When Bayard and de Whittingham looked down on this bridge, they saw it thronged by numerous and impatient bodies of the enemy, some of whom, in their eagerness to pursue,

fording the torrent above and below it without the least order or respect to military discipline. The pursuers, in fact, had much more the appearance of a routed and retreating army than of one following up a flying foe.

With all the speed which the nature of the ground permitted, Bayard led his little troop up the eastern bank of the river. From the elevation which he there attained, he perceived the French army, re-united with the compact body of Swiss infantry, retreating in good order, while, at the same time, it sustained the incessant, but irregular, attacks of the pursuers. Our Chevalier instantly cheered on his men to their support ; but he had the pain of joining his commander just as the latter had, by a simultaneous, but unsuccessful, attack, attempted to drive back the whole collected body of his pursuers. In this sally, as it may be called, Bonnivet had not only been worsted with much loss, but had also received a severe wound, which disabled him from directing, any longer, the movements of

his army. Bayard rode up to him as he was lifted from his horse. Short greeting passed between these gallant men—for with all his faults, the Admiral had shown a brilliant courage—particularly in this last affair.

“Welcome in our greatest need, *mon cher Chevalier*,” exclaimed the wounded commander. “I knew that it was useless for you to attempt to hold out with your small force; but so great is the number of deserters who hasten back over the mountains, that even your troop will be of essential service to me. I can do no more. You must take the command.”

“I, Admiral?” exclaimed Bayard in surprise.

“Aye, you. Do not suppose that we do not know your merit, though you are so bad a courtier that you know not how to get it publicly honoured. In danger, you are appreciated.”

“I ask for no honour save that of serving my king like a loyal knight.”

“ I know it ; I know it : and so much the better ; for you can win little honour here. However, I can speak no more. I faint already. Lead the army back as speedily as you can. Make these Swiss rogues bear what you can of the brunt. Canaille ! if they had joined me sooner—”

His speech was interrupted by increased faintness ; and Bayard directed him to be removed, with all care, to the advanced column. He then endeavoured to take order with his disordered bands. His name and character had much influence ; and inspired more confidence in the men than they had gathered from the disabled Admiral. By exhortation, by commands, by entreaties, and by threats, he got the several captains to draw their men into closer ranks, and restored some order in the routed army. The repulse which it had received in the last charge had compelled Bonnivet to abandoned several pieces of heavy artillery ; standards, ammunition, and provisions, had also fallen into the hands of the

victors. Discouraging and unenviable was the post to which his new friend had been exalted ; and yet de Whittingham marvelled as he observed the courage, the method, the resolution, and the quick, yet steady, decision, with which he laboured to convert the general flight into an orderly retreat.

In the midst of these endeavours, a party of the victorious Italians made a fresh charge upon the discomfited army, and cut off a few prisoners, amongst whom was the Captain de la Vergne we have already mentioned in Bayard's troop—an excellent officer to whom the Chevalier was very particularly attached, and who had been, at the moment, most successfully exerting himself to restore order in the confused mass. The sight of his friend carried beyond the river deeply affected Bayard. He smote his forehead with his steel gauntlet, and, in few, but heart-felt, words, regretted that his position forbade him to make any attempt to rescue him.

“ But I am prevented,” cried de Whitting-

ham, who was beside him, "I am prevented by no such trust as that which hampers you. Let me attempt to mark my sense of the favour you have shewn me."

He instantly darted off in pursuit of the retreating party. Bayard directed a score of men to follow and support him. Without looking back, the youth dashed into the deep stream. His excellent horsemanship was shown by the gallant style in which he enabled his beast to stem the torrent. Those who followed to his assistance turned their horses to a ford twenty paces higher up the river, which de Whittingham, in his eagerness, had not remarked. At the same instant they reached the opposite bank under the dropping fire of the enemy. Gallantly did the young Englishman charge the retreating party, and gallantly was he supported by those who had, all along, marked and admired the spirit which had induced him to join their standard in its retreat. De la Vergne was rescued after a short, but spirited, resistance. Again they

forded the torrent; and, after a quarter of an hour, with the loss only of one trooper, de Whittingham had the satisfaction of seeing the Captain and Bayard grasp each others' hands with the warmest congratulation which the warmest friendship could prompt.

"To this, however, to this brave young volunteer we are indebted," said Bayard. "You have done as gallant a deed as I ever witnessed. I have not now time properly to express my thanks."

If ever de Whittingham had known happiness, that happiness was far exceeded at the present moment. His visor, indeed, concealed the warm glow of pride and joy with which he returned the approving grasp of his commander's hand: but that commander so well could sympathise with pure and lofty feelings that he had no difficulty in accounting for the single dew drop which, through the closed bars of the youth's helmet, he perceived to glisten on the long eye-lash within.

Gradually, while this little incident oc-

curred, had some order been restored in the retreating army: and they now advanced more steadily towards the little village of Gattinara. Here a halt was called, and every disposition was made as if the army were taking up its quarters for the night. But while, deceived by these appearances, the Italian leaders recalled their advanced parties and prepared to bivouac after a most fatiguing and eventful day, Bayard, secretly, and as silently as possible, sent forwards all the artillery and baggage which remained since the engagement of the morning. When it was thus placed in security, at the head of the column, he profited by the darkness of the early evening, and again pushed on half-a-dozen miles towards Ivrea. Either the enemy did not perceive the retreat of the French army, or deemed it more prudent to await until the next morning, ere it should renew the attack.

The moon rose, and shed her silent splendour on as grand and as interesting a scene as she had ever lighted up. The valley of

Aosta opened before them, bounded by the noble snow-covered peaks of the Great St. Bernard. Nearer was a varied landscape, in which cultivated fields and vineyards, blended with the dark woods and rocky sides of some advancing branch of the mighty Alps. Around the base of these, wound, in succession, the heavy artillery on its lumbering carriages; the wearied, the lame, and the wounded; the dense masses of slowly advancing foot-soldiers; the more impatient cavalry, fretting that their march and their escape beyond the mountains should be delayed by what seemed the laggard pace of the infantry. Onwards wound the lengthened column, in the pale moonlight, till, at length, came in sight the serried ranks of the Swiss, with whom Bonnivet had effected his junction, and who now protected the rear of that army, which, had they sooner joined it, they might have saved, and even rendered triumphant. From many a corslet, and from many a helmet—from the point of many a lance

and the wide curve of many a shield—glanced the reflected moonlight, or softly seemed to blend with the dancing plume on many a lofty crest. And there in front rose those eternal mountains—still piercing the highest heavens—still snow-bound and impassive, though seemingly not unconscious of all that occurred beneath them—still proclaiming the power and the grandeur of their Almighty Creator—still vyeing, in their whiteness, with the lustre of the silvery orb suspended in the blue vault beside them—still attempting to enclose and protect the beautiful land beyond; as they vainly did of yore, when Hannibal first invaded it.

The mind and the heart of Warren de Whittingham were formed to appreciate such a scene; and long did he lie in blissful reverie ere he closed his eyes in sleep, in the quarters which the wearied army had at length taken up for the night.

That same moon lighted the Imperialists across the foaming river Sessia.

On the following morning, the second after the evening on which our story opened, Bayard was again on his march. Steadily, slowly, and in the order which he had planned for battle, in case he should be attacked, his troops proceeded towards the little village of Revisigno. In the rear, marched the Swiss, who now did good service, by gallantly repelling the first troops of cavalry, which, with the wild disorder they had exhibited on the preceding evening, rushed madly to attack the retreating foe. The steady discipline of the mountaineer mercenaries easily repelled their irregular assaults; but a more dangerous foe now advanced on the rear of Bayard's army. The Marquis of Pescara, at the head of his own light cavalry, came up, and personally directed a charge, which threatened once more to throw the retreating army into utter confusion. To oppose this, Bayard collected his men-at-arms, while the rest of the column still continued its retreat. At the head of these, and of a few gentlemen who were

around him, he received and repelled for awhile the impetuous charge of the marquis.

It is needless to say that de Whittingham did not desert his chosen commander. Like him, he fought long at the head of his men; though we fear, that he did not, like him, retain that cool judgment in danger which habit only can bestow. He had, however, the satisfaction of attracting the notice, and receiving, in a few hurried words, the cheering approbation of his leader. But these few words were destined to be almost the last of military command which that leader was ever to deliver. Scarce had he spoken them, when De Whittingham perceived that he was struck by the bullet of a *harquebus*, and heard him murmur to himself—

“Jesus! ah mon Dieu, je suis mort—Oh, my God, I am slain.”

In order to encourage his men, he had fought with his visor opened; and Warren immediately saw him change colour as he raised his sword to his lips and devoutly kissed the cross

which formed its hilt. Our young friend and de la Vergne caught him as he was about to fall from horseback. He was gently lifted to the ground, and they also dismounted to have him carried out of the press.

"No, no," he said, as they attempted to remove him: "it is all over with me: I am a dead man: but, at least, do not make me die with my back to the enemy."

A faint smile played over his features.

"D'Alegre, Disbach, they rally," he cried, seeing Pescara's cavalry again advance. "Collect your men for a fresh charge."

The two he named reluctantly left him to obey his last order.

"Here, you brave fellow," continued the wounded man to a Swiss soldier, "help this gentleman to move me to the foot of that tree, that I may see the movements of the enemy, and die with my face towards them."

"My poor brave youth," he said to de Whittingham, when he was thus supported against the tree, "my poor youth, thou hast

chosen but a sorry leader, who has led thee into an unfortunate field. Weep not for me, however," he added, to him and to his other attendants. "It is the will of God to draw me to himself: he has preserved me long enough in this world, and has bestowed upon me more mercy and grace than I have ever deserved."

The slight dispirited charge which he had headed against Pescara having been easily repulsed, Captain d'Alegre with his other attendants now joined in proposing to remove the wounded knight, lest he should fall into the hands of the advancing enemy.

"Leave me to think of my conscience for the few moments I have yet to live," prayed Bayard earnestly. "Retire yourselves, lest you should be made prisoners. It is all over with me: you can be of no assistance to me. Farewell, my good friends," he added, as they reluctantly retired. "I recommend my soul to your prayers."

"Wherefore, my kind young friend," he continued to de Whittingham, "do you linger

near me? Save yourself with the others."

"You permitted me to accompany you in this field. I will never leave you upon it," resolutely replied the youth.

"If such is thy kind determination," rejoined the wounded man, "I will try thy friendship still further. No priest, alas, is here through whom I might confess my sins to my Creator: do thou be the channel by means of which I may testify my sorrow and crave forgiveness."

Though surprised at the high-wrought feelings of the dying Chevalier which prompted him to adopt this unusual mode of appeasing his conscience, de Whittingham, with christian sympathy, assented to his request, and declared that whatever he might confess should rest in his bosom as securely as if it were delivered under the seal of sacramental penance. For the space of five minutes, the pious knight breathed forth his sentiments of contrition and hope into the breast of the Englishman.

"Let me now beg of thee," he added at

length, "to find some opportunity of assuring the king that I die his servant, and only regretting that I cannot serve him any more."

So strange was the situation in which de Whittingham thus found himself—the sole attendant and confidential companion at his hour of death of the first knight in Europe—that he felt rather relieved when the Marquis of Pescara at the head of a small body of his victorious cavalry came up to the spot where he reclined beside the wounded hero.

"What have we here?" cried the Marquis; "a knight lingering beside a wounded man? such examples of attachment are rare, that one should deliver himself a prisoner rather than desert his friend!"

As the Italian general approached nearer however and recognised the proud bearing of the knight and his now pallid features, "Good God!" he cried, "it is the chevalier Bayard! would to heaven, Seigneur," he added, as his eyes were suffused with tears, "would to heaven that I had shed all but my life-blood, if

by so doing I could have now held you my prisoner in good health ; I would prove to you how much I have ever esteemed your person, your valour, and your many virtues. Never, in faith, do I again hope to meet your equal."

The noble-minded Marquis then sent for his own tent, which he caused to be spread over the dying hero ; and, having assisted to place him upon a couch, he set a guard of honour around him, and went himself to fetch a priest to administer the last consolations of religion. De Whittingham watched at the door of the tent while the wounded knight confessed himself to the minister of God. Many a leader and many a humble trooper in the hostile army gathered, in silence and sorrow, around the pavilion. It was, in sooth, an affecting sight :—proving how great the influence of individual private character, even in those long ages of war and violence, in which it might be supposed that all individual influence would sink unheeded in the general conflict of discordant interests.

When the priest intimated that his penitent had unburdened his mind, the Duke of Bourbon, who had joined the Spanish forces in the morning, and whose counsel had much tended to their present success, advanced to the door of the tent. A sudden start, as he looked on de Whittingham, proved that he had not forgotten the youth who, although unfriended, had yet spurned the tempting offers of the traitor. De Whittingham could not judge, from his manner, whether he still retained against him that animosity which he now feared his own frankness must have provoked. The duke did not recognise him by word or intentional sign, but passed on within the tent.

“ My dear Captain Bayard,” exclaimed the Prince, as he drew near the couch on which lay the dying man; “ my dear Bayard, believe that I am grieved to see you in this plight. No one has loved and honoured you more than I have ever done. I do, indeed, sincerely pity you ! ”

“I thank you, my lord,” replied Bayard, summoning up the little strength that remained to him, “I thank you. But there is nought to pity in my state. I die as a man of honour should—in the service of my king. Oh, my lord, pity rather yourself, who bear arms against your prince, your country, and your oath.”

“What could I do?” responded the prince, much affected. “You know how I was placed—degraded, disgraced, impoverished. I have but taken the only steps that were left open to me.”

“Not so; not so, prince,” faintly replied the knight. “Seek the king’s pardon—pray for his reconciliation. Neither wealth nor honour can attend your present course. But I can speak no more,” he added, after a pause. “Let me only crave of you the freedom of this noble-minded youth.”

“My God,” he continued, aloud, as de Whittingham’s tears fell fast at this token of his kindness, “Oh, my God! who hast

promised to have mercy on repentant sinners, in Thee I hope; I confide in Thee. My God! my Creator! my Redeemer! pardon me, in thy goodness, the many sins of my life. Although no repentance on my part could suffice to efface them, yet, oh God! thou knowest I had resolved to repent and amend my ways, hadst thou prolonged my life. But let me trust in thee, and in thy mercy, without which I never could deserve to join thee."

"Oh, my God! my Father!" he continued, in broken sentences, "forget my sins—listen only to thy clemency. Let thy justice be appeased by the merits—by the blood of Jesus Christ....."

Death cut short the sentence. Thus, on the 30th of April, 1524, in the forty-eighth year of his age, expired the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*.

We trust that we have not detained the Reader too long while recounting the details, which history confirms, of the death of this

Christian knight. For several generations, had his ancestors so died on the field of battle.

We will add but few more words on the subject. Pescara, we are informed, ordered the body of Bayard to be embalmed and sent to his relations; and such was the respect paid not only to the military talents, but also to the high chivalrous character, of the deceased, that the Duke of Savoy commanded it to be received with royal honours in all the cities of his dominions. In Dauphinée, Bayard's native country, the people, of all ranks, came out in solemn procession to meet it.

Having thus chased Bonnivet's army beyond the frontiers of Italy, Pescara did not deem it prudent to pursue it farther without artillery or military stores. The French general was, therefore, allowed to lead back its shattered remains into France. The few towns in the Milanese, which had held out for him, immediately capitulated to the victorious

leaders ; and at the end of this short campaign not a single fortress, or a single ally, remained beyond the Alps to support the ruined cause of Francis the First.*

* The military details in this Chapter are taken from Guicciardini and Robertson. The conduct and very language of Bayard are transcribed from M. de Berville's "*Histoire de Pierre Terrail, dit le Chevalier Bayard, sans peur et sans reproche*."

CHAPTER XI.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

“ Non bisogna la morte ;
Ch'a stringer nobil core
Prima basta la fiede, e poi l'amore.
Ne quella che si cerca
E si difficil fama
Seguendo chi ben ama ;
Ch'amore è merce e con amar si merca.
E cercando l'amor, si trova spesso
Gloria immortale appresso.”—TASSO'S *AMINTA*.

THE Christian hero was no more. Slowly and silently the leaders of the allied forces, who had witnessed his edifying death, turned them to leave the tent. De Whittingham made a step forwards to the Duc de Bourbon, who, in the conflicting emotions awakened by Bayard's last words of advice, had evidently forgotten the presence of the young stranger.

“ To whom, my lord duke, am I to deliver my sword ? ” enquired the Englishman, with

feelings embittered by the recollection of his last conversation with de Bourbon, as well as by regret at the sight they had just witnessed.

“Tush, poor lad!” exclaimed the prince kindly. “Lend me thine arm.”

With condescending familiarity, he passed his gauntleted hand within the arm of the Englishman, and silently and pensively led him from the sad pavilion.

“And didst thou really think,” asked de Bourbon, as they slowly paced the ground near the spot where the body of troops whom he commanded were gradually collecting and re-forming their ranks—“didst thou really think that I could retain as prisoner one who, but two days ago, rescued me from the attack of a traitorous assassin—one who has perilled himself to attend, in his last moments, the very flower of chivalry, whom we all mourn—one who is recommended to me by that very knight with his latest breath? No, no: think better of Charles of Bourbon. He may have

been drawn to do that which thou canst not comprehend ; he may have been driven to do that which thou canst not justify, because thou canst not measure the enormity of the injuries to which he has been exposed ; but," continued the prince, his eye flashing, and his cheek reddening with a glow of enthusiasm which Bayard's last words had called up ; and in very deed, his spirit was addressing that of the departed chevalier, rather than the unknown youth on whom he leaned—"but," he continued, "Charles of Bourbon is the keeper of his own honour, and is responsible only to Europe for the propriety of his actions. And Charles of Bourbon," he added more calmly, "is incapable of forgetting what he owes to the saviour of his own life, to the latest friend and follower of Bayard, or to the last wishes of the knight himself. Thou art free."

A deep inclination of his head marked de Whittingham's sense of the noble feelings expressed by the traitor prince. His heart was too full for meet reply in words.

“And now,” continued the duke, “now that we have all lost the captain to whom you had so enthusiastically attached yourself—what are your plans? Do you still decline to adhere to one who offers you his favour?”

“Believe me, my lord,” replied de Whittingham, “that I am not less grateful than I was the day before yesterday. But my friend, to whose family I owe every advantage which I have possessed, tarries for me at the monastery. I must avail myself of the boon of personal freedom, for which I am indebted to your royal highness, and immediately speed to join him.”

“So be it!” said the prince, with some slight show of offended pride, which he evidently, though vainly, endeavoured to suppress. “So be it! Here, Pescara,” he called to that nobleman, who now rode up towards them—“here is this prisoner, to whom, at poor Bayard’s request, I have restored his freedom, so anxious to re-visit your fair Lady Vittoria, that I attempt in vain to persuade him to tarry

with me. He will needs on to the monastery, to lay his trophies at her beautiful feet."

"Have you, young gentleman,"—civilly enquired the General,—"Have you lately been at the monastery where the Marchesa di Pescara has taken up her abode?"

"Two evenings ago, I was indebted to the good monks for a night's lodging, and some kindness. I sought it with my friend Sir Maurice Tilton, who there awaits my return."

"Tilton in Italy again!" exclaimed Pescara in surprise. "What can be his errand now?"

"One, I believe, to the Court of Rome, whither he proceeds so soon as I rejoin him."

"So it is, then!" said the Marquis. "Peace and war travel in company—diplomacy and knight-errantry. However, I have no time to unravel all the threads which you would put into my hands," he continued, turning to the duke. "I leave this field in half an hour, young sir," he said to de Whittingham, "and shall call at the monastery on my road to

Allessandria. If you have no objection, you shall detail your adventures to me as we ride on together."

De Whittingham eagerly expressed his thanks to the Marquis for this considerate arrangement. The light cavalry, which the latter kept in better order than was the case with the rest of the troops at that period, had soon returned to their ranks. Raffaele Monza, who had acted, throughout the day, the part of a faithful, attentive, and valorous squire to the young man—although he had thought it most prudent to skulk amongst some neighbouring rocks and brushwood when he saw the army routed and his master place himself in the power of the enemy that he might attend his dying Captain—Raffaele Monza now rejoined him in high spirits; as he gathered from the bearing and friendly looks of the two leaders that no harsh imprisonment would repay his confidence.

"As you will accept no other boon from me," said the Duke de Bourbon, as he now took

leave of the young adventurer with all the natural suavity which he had at length regained, "perhaps you will refuse my pass or safe-conduct for yourself and your friend. It may, however, be useful to you in your wandering through Italy."

"Take it—take it, Seigneur," interposed Raffaelle, rather too freely, to his master. "I only wish the Duke of Urbino could sign it, as I do not feel very safe from his officer, Colonel Maldonato."

"True, true;" said the Prince, overhearing the half muttered suggestion of Raffaelle. "I forgot that I and you and your friend, as well as this good fellow, are not on the best terms with Urbino's Colonel. He shall sign the pass also."

"What can you be talking about?" asked Pescara. "Only get your pass ready; and then, if I sign it also, I suppose it will be of avail over all the vagabonds in Europe—for I suspect that the greater number serve under our three united commands. I shall hear all

about it as we ride along," he added. Then after riding apart awhile with de Bourbon, Urbino, and the other principal leaders of the allied forces, the Marquis rejoined his corps, which had already begun its retrograde march; and, sending for de Whittingham to his side, he entered into lengthened enquiries respecting the state in which the youth had left Donna Vittoria, and the meaning of those allusions from the Duke of Bourbon which had been unintelligible to him. He was pleased with the manner in which our hero replied to his queries; and thus, in easy and flattering converse with another of the ablest generals of the age, and with a feeling of self-satisfaction and self-confidence derived from the consciousness of the noble and approved part he had lately acted, de Whittingham re-entered the monastery two days after that on which he had first sought the shelter of its hospitable walls.

As the events of the first twenty-four hours of our chronicle have detained us so long,

we cannot, even were it decorous to do so, tarry to describe the affectionate meeting of the fond husband and wife ; nor the approving banter with which Tilton again greeted his chivalrous knight-errant companion, as, with a feeling of blended pride, sarcasm and envy, he was pleased to call him.

The monastery is withdrawn from our view. The scene is shifted. Other prospects and other interests display themselves to our gifted glance.

Reader, wilt thou study them with us ? Wilt thou follow us as thy "cicerone" to Rome ?

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW SCENE.

“ Oh, Rome, my county ! City of the soul !

The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,

Lone mother of dead nations ! and controul,

In their shut breasts, their petty misery.

What are our woes and sufferance ?—Come and see

The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way

O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye

Whose agonies are evils of a day !—

A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.”

CHILDE HAROLD.

Who does not remember the scene ? Who has not personally visited the very spot ? As futile were it to describe the approach from Charing-cross to Westminster abbey, as that of the Vatican from the noble bridge of St. Angelo. Every Englishman is now as intimately acquainted with Rome as with London.

The rapid Tiber onward rolled its eternally muddy waters : the noble bridge of St. Angelo, unadorned by the statues and balustrades of iron that now decorate it, spanned the yellow billows : the fortified mausoleum of Hadrian frowned at the opposite extremity of the bridge ; from the summit, and from every part of the exterior fortifications, cannon darkly lowered : under their black banner, hoisted on a staff at the entrance, stood several Swiss soldiers, wearily leaning on their enormously long pikes ; near to them, sauntered a knight armed at all points, and whose horse, ready caparisoned, was seen through the open gateway of the castle yard, impatiently champing the bit, and striving to jerk the rein from the hand of the armed trooper, who paced up and down the flagged court : beside him, stood a stripling page, whose rich dress of velvets and silk proved that he anticipated no harder duty than holding the heavy lance of his patron for an idle and irksome hour. Soldiers in garrison exhibit, in every age and in every coun-

try, the same listless manner : it were needless to dwell further upon the bearing of those who loitered away the hours of their watch at the gate of the Castel Sant Angelo on the afternoon of the 4th of May, 1524.

“What dost think, comrade, of this rumour ?” at length enquired one of the soldiers of his fellow. “Dost believe there has been a battle ?”

“How can I tell ?” replied the one whom he addressed. “Folks talk about it ; but no one can tell why they do so. I have no more means of knowing than thou or they.”

“Then I will enlighten the ignorance of you both,” interposed a third ; “there has been a battle.”

“How canst thou tell ?” cried the other two soldiers at once.

“There has been a battle,” reiterated the former. “Believe it on my word ; though I do not object to tell what makes me believe it myself. I believe it because every body says so.”

“But no one knows why he says so,” replied the first speaker.

“Not know why he says so!” cried the expounder of the doubt. “Nay; he knows that he says so because he heard it from another; he only does not know where that other heard it. Now, for my part, I believe every general rumour. I never knew a general rumour without some foundation in truth.”

“The Governor knows nothing about it, at all events,” said his comrade; “for he has not been out of the castle to-day, and no messenger has been in to him.”

“The Governor! bless thee! why such as he never hear reports until such as we are tired of them. Depend upon it, the Pope himself knows nothing at all of what we are all talking about.”

“That I’ll bet a bottle of wine he does not! No special messenger has come over the bridge to him to day, and he does not keep so many clever fellows about him, to tell him all the news, as his cousin Leo did.”

“No : they say this new Pope has n’t any fool yet : those are the chaps to pick up news, and to make the most of it too.”

“Here, however, comes some one at last,” cried the guard who had first spoken. “I wish I knew what he is hurrying on so for !”

“Order !” cried the officer, as he strode back and posted himself under the archway.

The soldiers silently drew up on their posts. A clattering of hoofs was now heard speeding down the narrow street that opened upon the further end of the bridge : instantly it re-echoed on the crown of the arch, as two knights, the one in white armour, the other in a coat of burnished steel, urged their foaming horses towards the castle. Twelve mounted troopers followed, keeping as close to their leaders as the evidently exhausted state of their horses would permit. They were all well-armed and sturdy-looking followers : but the whole company was evidently too much bent upon business to attend to any of those observances of style and etiquette which, in those times, often rendered the progress of a single knight

a splendid pageant. The whole troop crossed the bridge, swept round to the left between the castle and the river, and proceeded, at the same pace, along the street of Santo Spirito.

What a scene of confusion opened upon our friends—for, as we do not wish to be unnecessarily mysterious with the Reader we will, at once, admit that the strange company was composed of de Whittingham and Tilton, followed by Raffaele Monza and other troopers, whom they had found no difficulty in enlisting in their service ere they left the monastery in Lombardy—what a scene of confusion opened upon our friends, as they emerged from this street into the noble opening, at the top of which now towers the mighty church of St. Peter, whose sides are enclosed by the wide-stretching colonnade, and in the centre of which the obelisk and the beautiful fountains rise and glitter in fairest uniformity! A shapeless mass of unfinished masonry rose before them at the bottom of the square. In some

places, the walls towered to a fair elevation ; in others they scarcely rose above the ground ; and in others again, not even the outline or the trench for the foundation was traced in the soil. Immense blocks, nay heaps, of stone and of marble encumbered the ground on every side. Amongst these, teams of cream-coloured oxen slowly drew their ponderous loads—either bringing more stone from the river or moving that which was already collected. Crowds of workmen, of every description, swarmed over the ground. Chisels rung, tro-wels clicked, saws gritted and windlasses creaked. Oaths were imprecated, jokes flew, laughter responded, orders were loudly given ; the water hissed as it was dashed upon the hot lime, clouds arose above the seething cauldron, and mixing with the canopy of dust that ever hung upon the busy scene, veiled the whole, for a while, from the eyes of the travellers.

Maurice Tilton had witnessed all this before at a former visit to Italy : for sixty years had

the work already continued, and one hundred and fifty years more were to elapse ere that scene of confusion should settle down into harmony, magnificence and repose.

What, though Raffaello and other architects had constantly laboured at the mighty mole ? —So little apparent was the progress they had made, that Tilton perceived not the least advance towards the completion of the vast design. To de Whittingham the whole was new ; and he gladly halted his troop at the entrance of the adjoining Vatican palace, that he might have full opportunity of overlooking the busy and interesting scene, while his friend should deliver his credentials and his news within.

There, too, on the left of the court, uprose those four tiers of elegant colonnades, but just completed under the direction of Raffaele, and on the walls and ceilings of which his immortal pencillings then glowed with recent freshness from the master's hand. With a light smile, de Whittingham gazed from the open

lodges (as the galleries have been called) to the cloudless sky above, and blessed himself that he had visited a climate in which those invaluable paintings might be safely committed to the plaster wall of a colonnade ever open to the northern aspect.

“In England,” thought he, “those walls, nay those pillars themselves, would be covered with green mould in the course of two years; and the colours of the artist would, long ere that period, have been washed down by rain, fogs, and incessant damps.”

Again he smiled: and light was his heart and full of hope as he drew up his followers outside the court of the pontifical palace.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENLISTING.

“Nos soldats se battirent en soldats du Pape : ils se mirent à genoux en demandant absolution *in articulo mortis*.”—VOLTARE.

IN one of those rooms in the Vatican palace which are now known as the *stanze*, or chambers of Raffaello, a small party of ecclesiastical dignitaries slowly walked. At their head, that is to say, rather advanced before them, was one whose commanding figure, whose large black eyes — the peculiar feature of the Medici family—whose rather military carriage, dark beard, earnest and thoughtful expression, showing a mind trained to serious contemplation, and to strict habits of business, would, even without the appropriate dress, have

pointed him out as the sovereign pontiff, Clement the Seventh. Scarcely a step behind him, walked, on the right hand, Nicholas Schomberg, whose German cast of countenance, as it made him look younger than he really was, gave no evidence of the stern, uncompromising, domineering habits of his mind. On the other hand, John Mathew Giberto, dressed in a prelate's flowing robe of purple silk, surmounted by the spencer of white point lace and the ermine tippet, moved beside the pontiff, with whom he was engaged in animated and cheerful conversation. A severe scowl on the features of the German harmonised well with the white woollen petticoat, over which he wore the black merino cloak and tippet of the order of preaching monks to which he had formerly belonged.

The room in which the party now stood was encumbered by scaffolding, from which, as they entered, an artist, with piercing eye and coal black beard, had reverently descended. With pencil in hand, he cast himself on one

knee at the feet of the pontiff, and prayed for his blessing.

"You should not have moved, Signor Giulio," kindly said Clement. "We have so early lost poor Raffaello that we must keep his successor strictly at work, at least until this hall be completed."

"Would, most holy father," replied Giulio Romano, "that I were worthy, not to succeed him, but to complete the works of my dear master."

"You have at least shown yourself," interrupted Schomberg, "competent to efface what your dear master, as you call him, had commenced. I thought that painting had been half completed by Raffaello."

"Nay, Fra Niccolo," responded the other counsellor, "it was scarcely begun. Raffaello had, indeed, prepared the wall to take oil colours, and had painted the figures of Justice and Benignity on each side; but his Holiness and I considered that it might be better to allow the Signor Giulio to take off the prepa-

ration again, as he wished to paint it *a fresco*; but he was directed not to touch the two figures that were already completed."

"What think you, Fra Niccolo?" enquired the Pope, with somewhat more of interest than the occasion appeared to require.

"I am no judge of painting, your Holiness," tersely replied the German.

"But you have been so long amongst us," Clement suggested, "that you surely ought to have acquired a taste for the fine arts. They alone are, in some degree, allowed to humanise this discordant, this iron age."

"Your Holiness may well say, in some degree," observed Giberto. "All the favour which your cousin, Leo the Tenth, of blessed memory, showed to the professors of literature, and of the fine arts, was not able to quench the match that fired one single cannon."

"No; and it caused a good many cannons to be fired," added Schomberg. "The money which he squandered on verse-makers and

buffoons might have paid those who would have enforced the peace of Italy."

"Impossible, my dear friend," rejoined the Pontiff. "You two know, as well as ourselves—for we transacted almost the whole public business of Giovanni's splendid reign—you two know how impossible it was to quell the animosity of the two mighty rivals, Francis and the Emperor, who divide and spoil Italy between them."

"The Emperor," replied Schomberg, with the domineering national sympathy of a German, "the Emperor only wishes to be left in peace."

"And so says the King of France also," Clement replied; "and yet, between them both, neither will be at peace himself, nor allow his neighbour to be so. For our part," he added with a sigh, "we know not on what to determine."

"You have determined, my dear Sovereign," kindly interposed the Italian counsellor. "Let not your mind be fatigued by recurring

again to that which has been resolved in council. You have determined to enforce the truce planned by your predecessor, Adrian."

"And what were the consequences of Pope Adrian's forbearance during his short pontificate of twenty months?" Schomberg enquired, with a sarcastic smile. "As he was a Dutchman and I am a German, Monsignor Giberto will not suspect me of being prejudiced against his policy : What did the Romans think of him?"

"Oh, you mean the pasquinade!" exclaimed Giberto. "You should not have recalled it to his Holiness at a time when we purpose to follow the same policy."

"The pasquinade?" exclaimed the Pope. "What was it? We remember indeed to have heard of one, but other cares drive such light matters from our mind."

"Only one of the foolish Roman squibs," said Giberto. "Poor Adrian was bent only upon reforming abuses and controuling the license of the city ; and so rejoiced were the

Romans at being freed from such a monitor that, the night after his death, they adorned the door of his physician's house with garlands surmounted by an inscription of them

TO THE DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY."

"The witty rogues !" exclaimed Clement much diverted : " we have travelled and transacted affairs amongst many different people ; but we have no where met with the wit and light-heartedness which, amid all their disasters, ever clings to the Romans. — Poor Adrian, however," he added thoughtfully, " was a good and pious and well-intentioned man ; but he laboured not only under the disadvantage of being a foreigner, but under that of succeeding to the brilliant reign of Leo. People contrasted the successes and the prodigality of the one, with the unavoidable misfortunes of the times, and the economy which that very prodigality rendered necessary to the other. Adrian was a good man. We are sorry to hear of the inscription which has been placed on his tomb."

“That his only unhappiness in life was being pope?” added Giberto: “but I understand that Cardinal Eikenwort is about to have that removed.”

“He shews gratitude to a kind patron,” thoughtfully observed the Pope.

Let it not be supposed that this conversation had been continued in the hall in which we first began to report it, and that the poor painter, Giulio Romano, as posterity has designated him, had remained the whole while on his knees at the feet of the Pontiff. We must leave certain connecting links of our narrative to be supplied by the imagination of the Reader. The three friends (for so they had ever been until the elevation of the Cardinal Julius of Medici to the apostolic throne inspired ambition and jealousy between his two hitherto devoted adherents; who, although perhaps, still equally attached to their patron, now began to adopt different views on every subject that was submitted to them), the three friends had left the painter to continue his

work while they paced the three adjoining halls, and occasionally passed out on the admired colonnade which served as a balcony and verandah to the several stories of the palace.

“How much pleasanter,” observed the Pope, after one of these transitions; “how much pleasanter those rooms would be if they were not darkened by these galleries! Poor Leo, with his usual profusion, could not resist Raffaello’s idea of raising a grand colonnade; but, with all deference to Signor Sanzio, we cannot think four tiers of pillars, one above another in this style, to be consistent with good architecture: and another objection we have to them is that they darken the rooms within so much that the noble paintings with which their walls are covered can scarcely be discerned.”

They now re-entered the hall of Constantine, as the room in which the painter was engaged has been since called.

“Dost think, Signor Giulio,” enquired the Pontiff, “that the battle fields of the Romans

presented such a scene of confusion as you have represented in that apparition of the cross, and as your outlines now declare still more strongly to have existed in the engagement with Maxentius ?”

“Your Holiness must not impute either the merits or the demerits of the design to me. I but follow the sketches of Raffaello Sanzio.”

“True, true ; and he was no general. Had he been one, he would have attached himself more particularly to one point of attack, and have brought that one more prominently forwards.”

“On reflection,” continued Clement, as they sauntered out of the room, and it will be observed that the five months that had elapsed since his elevation to the Papacy had been scarcely enough to blunt his feelings to the mighty change, or to destroy totally the novelty of his situation : “On reflection,” his Holiness continued, “it seems strange for a successor of St. Peter to be lecturing a

painter on the disposition of his army for battle ; and still more so that his own experience should have enabled him to form a judgment on the matter !”

“ Nay,” said Giberto, “ your Holiness will remember that St. Paul was a military man.”

“ Truly ;” replied the Pope : “ and, besides, my military life had always a touch of religion in it : we knights of Rhodes were never intended to be merely soldiers ; we are an ecclesiastical order of the church militant. Thus was I justified in acquiring my military knowledge when I commanded in the war of Urbino, and when, as legate from my cousin Leo, I captured Milan. In these troublous times, indeed, it is not unlikely that our military skill may be put into some requisition :—at all events, the experience we acquired, while we governed the Tuscan states, cannot be thrown away. — Yet this,” he added, after a pause, “ is one of the evils of this mixed government. The Pope being not

only head of the church, but temporal sovereign, the Cardinals deem it, you see, advisable to encrease the power of the latter by electing us who can bring Tuscany, as our dower, to support the state of the church."

"I see not, well, how it could be otherwise;" replied Giberto. "The old Roman emperors united the two characters; and the modern heretics will be obliged to give themselves a head somewhere. When the Greek Emperors quarrelled with the Holy See, it was only that they might make themselves heads of the church in their own dominions, by declaring their patriarchs independent of Rome."

"True; true;" rejoined the easily swayed Clement, as they passed out to the gallery. "But see," he continued, looking down on St. Peter's place below, "see, at what a rate those two lances are speeding on this way! Well if they do not lose themselves amongst all Baldassar Peruzzi's heaps of stone! We wish to God that noisy, littering work had never been begun, or had been begun upon

such a scale that we might see some prospect of its being ever finished."

"Your Holiness, we may anticipate, on the contrary," said Fra Niccolo, "will have the honour of completing the grandest monument the world has ever beheld."

"Well, well;" replied the Pontiff: "God grant that it be so; and may its splendour draw as many souls to God as the expense it has occasioned threatens to alienate!"

A chamberlain was now seen to approach at the other end of the gallery. Giberto advanced to meet him; and, returning to Clement, announced that the knights, whose arrival his Holiness had just observed, brought important news from the Milanese territory, and craved an audience. This was immediately granted; for, during his whole reign, Clement constantly made himself accessible to all whom public affairs, talents, or sanctity, rendered deserving of his notice. With all, he freely conversed—displaying a fund of varied information, which even his previous exalted

reputation had scarcely entitled the world to expect.

In truth, such high anticipations as the whole world had formed, from the election of Cardinal Julius of Medici to the Pontifical throne, had never hailed any of his predecessors. Brilliant as had been the reign of his first cousin, Leo X., its brilliancy had been considered to be chiefly owing to the directing spirit of Julius. Leo had been noted as a man of great talent, indeed, and of lofty aspirations; as one who was ambitious to render his epoch illustrious, by protecting and availing himself of all that galaxy of literary and artistical talent which had arisen upon Italy during the Pontificate of his predecessor Julius II.: but Leo was supposed to be too much engrossed in promoting the splendour of his Court and in his own social pleasures, to direct the widely spread interests which then centered in the papal chair. His cousin, the present Pontiff, had early attached himself to his fortunes; had been employed by

him in all the most difficult civil and military transactions—for, as a Knight of Rhodes, the latter were not incongruous with his clerical character; had acted as his friend, adviser, minister, during the whole of his brilliant reign. When, to these public pledges that he had given of his capacities, we add that Clement was known to be a man of severe virtue, temperate in all his actions, hostile to the wicked prodigality which he had never been able to check in Leo, well informed on every subject, whether of policy, of literature or of religion; and, above all; intelligent and assiduous in the conduct of public business—it will easily be supposed that the highest anticipations of a new era had hailed his recent election.

But, alas! for the new Pope's plans of general pacification and apostolic rule! For although Clement's high qualities had alone possessed such weight that, on his exaltation to the papacy, the Duke of Ferrara and others, whose forces were even then attacking the

states of the church, surrendered what they had already acquired and spontaneously retired within their own territories ; yet that anticipation of a “ new era ” was destined to produce more misfortunes than ever characterised any single reign. We know the old proverb which says—the nearer the church the further from God ; thus, though governed by an ecclesiastical power, the people of Rome were known to be more turbulent than the subjects of any temporal prince. Nothing could exceed, nothing could equal, the license which had ever characterised the great Roman Barons. Each princely family had ever maintained its army of followers, whose constant occupation had been rapine, murder, war upon each other, or, not less freely, upon the sovereign himself. The turbulence of their own subjects, no less than the aggressions of foreign powers, had compelled the popes to increase, as much as possible, their own temporal power, in order that, according to Macchiavelli, “ they might no longer be dependent on every petty baron

who chose to attack them." In order to repress the license of their powerful nobles, it had also been the policy of the pontiffs not to introduce any members of either party into the College of Cardinals; so that the latter might remain a stranger to the different factions which rent the city. Leo the Tenth had unfortunately departed from this prudent practice; and had bestowed the Cardinal's hat upon several of his principal nobility, amongst whom was Pompeo, the head of the house of Colonna—a warm imperialist at all times, and a most inveterate enemy of the Medici family. In the time of Julius the Second, this young man had even attempted to enact the part of a patrician Rienzi, by calling upon the people of Rome to rise and cast off the disgraceful thralldom of an ecclesiastical government. His subsequent entrance into the church had probably been dictated by a similar design to assume to himself the supreme power; although he was now willing to exercise it under the sanction of the triple mitre.

Let the Reader suppose that, while he has perused this short *resumé* of the state of public feeling at Rome, our old acquaintance, Maurice Tilton, has mounted those weary flights of steps which lead up to the chambers of Raffaello; and that, conducted by Fra Niccolo Schomberg, whom he had well known in former years, he is now kneeling to receive the pontifical blessing.

“God bless thee, my son,” exclaimed the Pope, signing the sign of the cross with two fingers, over Tilton’s brow. “God bless thee. Thou bringest news from what may be aptly called the *terra di lavoro*—the land where the best blood of Europe is shed, to secure none knows well what.”

“I have hastened to your Holiness,” replied Tilton, rising up with more assurance than was generally shewn by young men admitted into so high a presence—“I have hastened to your Holiness to announce a glorious victory.”

“No victory, my son, can be glorious save such as conduce to the glory of God—such as

we knights of Rhodes were wont formerly to achieve against the Turks ; and even then," continued the Pontiff, "we must regret the necessity which has occasioned so harsh a remedy."

Clement having thus satisfied his conscience, by saying that which was decorous for a christian pastor, now enquired, with the lively interest of a soldier and a politician, particulars of the reported engagement.

"The duke of Bourbon," hastily narrated Tilton, "has effected his escape from France and has joined the Imperial army with the title of Lieutenant-General from the Emperor. He and the Marchese of Pescara have totally routed the French in the valley of Aosta, and driven them beyond the Alps. The Chevalier Bayard has been slain."

"Important news, indeed," exclaimed the Pope. "Poor Bayard ! I am sorry for him. I well remember his light-hearted courtesy when, after the battle of Ravenna, I obtained a safe conduct to visit my cousin, Cardinal

Giovanni, who was then prisoner with his troops. And when, fair Sir, did this engagement occur ? ”

“ Five days since ; on the thirtieth day of last month.”

“ Were you present ? ”

“ May it please you Holiness, I was not ; I am an envoy rather of peace than of war. I shall have the honour of delivering my credentials to the Archbishop of Capua,” replied Tilton.

“ I have met this young knight before,” observed Schomberg ; “ a faithful servant to his king and the emperor.”

“ Well ; well ; ” interposed the Pope, “ we will consider of such matters hereafter. We would now prefer hearing some particulars of this important battle of which he brings us word.”

“ My friend, the knight, who accompanied me hither,” suggested Tilton, “ was in the engagement ; and if your Holiness would permit ”

“ Santa Maria ! ” exclaimed the Pope, “ why

does he not come up ? Send for him directly, Monsignore Giberto."

During the few minutes that elapsed ere de Whittingham entered the apartment, Clement walked aside to the hall of Constantine, fearful lest, in his present uncertainty as to the real state of parties, his German counselor might take him by surprise, and lead him to commit himself by an unconsidered opinion. Indeed the feelings were very contradictory with which he looked upon Schomberg; he loved and respected him for his long friendship and his tried services, while he began to fear him for the obstinate and domineering temper which he had exhibited since his patron's elevation. All the sympathies, moreover, of Schomberg were with the Emperor; and the Pope, as a true Italian, could not look upon either Charles or Francis in any other light than as 'ultramontanes' and 'barbarians,' battling with each other for usurped dominion in his own fair country. Giberto, the bishop of Verona, fully participated in these national feelings, and was therefore

more loved by the Pope, although, perhaps, not more trusted than his other counsellor.

“And so, young man,” exclaimed Clement to de Whittingham, after the usual ceremonial of presentation had been performed, “and so we hear that you were engaged in this last encounter with the French and Imperialists. Now recite to us all that you were enabled to observe.”

With bashfulness and with reverence, Warren de Whittingham began to comply with the Pope's order. We say with bashfulness; but yet de Whittingham was no longer the shy youth he first appeared to us. His short intercourse with Bayard, with Bourbon, with Pescara, and the feeling that he had honourably and valiantly acquitted himself in scenes of some trial, had given him a proper confidence which his manner did not before possess. The high praises which all the leaders we have mentioned had lavished upon his conduct, and the assurance he had received from both the latter of the willingness with which they

would receive him, and take charge of his future fortune in life, had perhaps, even still more, tended to remove the uncertainty and diffidence which had long withheld him from displaying his full character. To former bashfulness, modest assurance had now succeeded; this feeling dictated his words as he detailed the course of the action he had witnessed, and this prompted his regrets for the *Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, and the high admiration he expressed towards Pescara for the respect he had shown towards the dying captain.

“And on which side, my fair youth,” the Pope asked, much pleased with his manner, “on which side wert thou thyself engaged? For thou speakest with equal enthusiasm both of the French and the Imperial commanders?”

“On neither, if your Holiness will permit me the expression. Arms must be my business in life, and I could not resist the opportunity which was afforded me of entering my first field under the banner and at the side of

Bayard. But I have long hoped that the Turk will soon employ the united swords of Christendom, animated by the wishes of your Holiness, as by those of your predecessor."

"And so thou hast come to Rome to get the first news of the crusade?" enquired the Pope with a good-natured smile.

"I have come to Rome," replied de Whittingham, kneeling, while the blood rushed over his fine enthusiastic features, "to lay my sword at the feet of your Holiness."

He suited the action to the word, and placed his weapon on the marble floor, between himself and the Pontiff.

"Refuse it not, most Holy Father," he continued with earnestness. "This sword I took from the relaxed grasp of Bayard, when he received his death-wound. I am compelled to adopt the profession of arms; I am driven by circumstances from my own country, and am accidentally led into Italy. Oh, permit me to place myself at your Holiness's disposal until such time as the crusade be organised to repel the Pagan invaders from Hungary."

“What circumstances have driven thee from thine own country ? for I perceive thou art an Englishman, although thy speech has been well schooled :” enquired the Pope.

The poor youth, however, notwithstanding his newly-acquired nerve, was so overcome by his own feelings and the situation in which he found himself, that he was unable to reply to the Pontiff's question. With difficulty, he rose from his knees and was obliged to steady himself by resting his hand on the arm of Maurice Tilton. The latter, the while, briefly explained that de Whittingham, being discarded by his father, could not bring himself to serve as a soldier of fortune in his own country in which he ought to hold a high station ; and that he himself had induced him to accompany him into Italy. The friend then began to repeat the very high terms in which Pescara had spoken of his conduct at the Sessia ; but he was interrupted by Clement.

“We need not,” exclaimed the Pope, “we need not the recommendation of a tramontane

leader. My good youth, thine own looks and thy language have already secured to thee our favour. Thou shalt have honourable command in the Black Bands, organised by our kinsman Giovanni de Medici ; and shalt, at present, at all events, while he is absent with the army, be one of the guards nearest our person. We pray you, Monsignor Giberto, to give directions to this effect."

"When will your Holiness receive this other English knight who has credentials from the Cardinal of York?" enquired Schomberg, piqued by the Pope's allusions to his tramontane friends, and by the favour so suddenly shown to the strange young man, who was no creature of his.

"Not now," said the Pope: "thou forgettest, Fra Niccolo, that we have already undergone the Council-chamber this morning: no slight infliction while thou and Giberto draw different ways. We walked hitherward for some little relaxation; and our peaceful projects have, as usual, terminated in news of war:

however," he cheerfully added, "one party of barbarians is, at all events, driven out of Italy. Very impolitic, are we not, Schomberg? we read that thou thinkest so in that dark scowl: but we will tell thee a secret, man, and let thee look into an Italian heart:—we care for no state policy save that which may free our dear country from all foreign rulers. Aye; thou mayest frown, an' thou wilt; but thou knowest that this was our secret hope and object while we acted for Leo the Tenth; though we were never strong enough openly to avow it. Go; Fra Niccolo; with thy mighty emperor, whose wide rule compels thee to hail a Spaniard, a Dutchman, or a wild Indian, as a brother subject, thou canst not comprehend feelings of pure patriotism: still less canst thou understand the intensity of those feelings when applied, as old Dante fondly hath it,

"Al bel paese la dove il Si suona."

So saying, and leaning familiarly on the arm of his sturdy counsellor, Clement wended his way along the far stretching galleries of the Vatican.

CHAPTER XIV.

PALAZZO MASSIMI.

Veda l'oro, veda l'oro cosa fa'

BARBIERE DI SCIVIGLIA.

—“ Ce malheureux attendait
 Pour jouir de son bien une seconde vie.
 Il ne possédait pas l'or, mais l'or le possédait.”

LA FONTAINE.

“ HAVE I not,” enquired the Bishop of Verona, Giberto, when he was thus left alone with the two young men, “ have I not the honour of speaking to the Cavalliere Tilton, of England ?”

“ The honour is mine, Monsignore,” replied Maurice. “ We have indeed heretofore transacted business together.”

“ I thought so ; and am glad to hope that

you return with pleasure to our beautiful Italy. But now let me ask whether this bel-giovane, this brave enthusiast, your friend, has ever been in Rome before?" enquired the Bishop.

"Never, reverend father," replied de Whittingham; "and I must the more gratefully appreciate the kind reception I have just met with from his Holiness."

"But, Dio mio," exclaimed the Minister, "if thou hast never seen Rome, his Holiness must not coop thee up at once with his black bands in the Castel Sant' Angelo! We must give thee a holiday, and a breathing time after thy journey."

De Whittingham expressed his anxiety to enter at once upon his military duties. But Giberto insisted:—

"No; no;" he exclaimed. "I will not have such an affront put upon Rome as to imply that it is no better worth examining than a common garrison town! Go, rest thyself; see all that is to be seen: put thyself

in the way of his Holiness as often as thou wilt : but thou shalt not yet enter upon regular duty."

"But his Holiness," insisted de Whittingham.

"I will explain all," replied the minister ; "and if thou do but admire my country with that enthusiasm which I see is natural to thee, I shall have the more pleasure in furthering the Holy Father's kind intentions towards one so brave and so ingenuous. And now," continued the Bishop, turning to Tilton without attending to the expressions of gratitude which Warren would have poured forth, "now, my good Sir, what do you purpose to do with yourself and your followers ? Where do you take up your quarters ? Shall I have the pleasure of providing you ?"

Maurice Tilton, like an old diplomatist, declined the proposed honour ; alleging that he wished to appear at Rome in the character of a mere private individual. "I, therefore," he added, "propose to enquire if my old

landlord, Don Domenico dei Massimi, will give up to me again the south wing of his palace, near the Foro Trajano."

"Give it to you?" cried Giberto: "does your experience lead you to imagine anything so contrary to his nature? No; he will not *give* it up to you. But if you will pay him for it, his palace and everything else that he possesses will be at your service."

"I am glad to understand," Tilton replied, "that the old gentleman has not lost his most amusing characteristic."

With easy and friendly manner, the Bishop now took his leave, and the two Englishmen rejoined their followers in the court of the Vatican. That he might attract less attention, and reach his proposed quarters as speedily as possible, Maurice Tilton now turned to the right and led his company along the Lungara, or Western bank of the Tiber. An able *Cicerone* did Maurice prove himself as he pointed out to his young friend the several remarkable objects they passed on their road.

"There," said he, "is the splendid palace of old Cardinal di Riario,* whom Leo X. was so afraid of that he inspired his eminence with a mutual fear, which led him to reside at Naples, where I have heard that he died a year or two ago. But this palace on our left † I must bring thee to see on the first opportunity. It belongs to Agostino Chigi, a merchant...."

"A merchant!" exclaimed Warren; "why even our London merchants do not own such palaces as that."

"Nor are thy London merchants sovereign princes, as they are at Venice and Genoa. However, this Chigi is a mere Roman merchant: though he rivals the Popes themselves in splendid patronage of the arts. When I was in Rome before, he was printing some books in Greek—the first that had ever been printed: and they may be the last for aught I care; for their letters are so strangely shaped that it is impossible any one can read them."

* Now Palazzo Corsini.

† Now known as the Farnesina.

“And yet, I hear,” observed de Whittingham, “that, in some schools, they have undertaken to teach this newly discovered language.”

“Let them,” said Tilton, “so that I be not expected to learn it. I bless my stars that I was born before all this learning came to be so mighty fashionable. I wonder what good they expect will come of all their rage for educating people?”

This was a question which puzzled de Whittingham as much as it does some would-be-benighted-ones in the present age. He, therefore, made some further enquiry respecting the beautiful palace on their left.

“I was at a feast,” said Tilton, “that the merchant gave on the baptism of one of his children. Pope Leo and all the cardinals and foreign ambassadors in Rome were invited. He gave us several dishes of parrots’ tongues.”

“Parrots’ tongues !” cried Warren.

“Aye,” replied his more *educated* friend ;

“parrots’ tongues ; the very greatest rarity and delicacy that can be produced. All the plates and goblets were of wrought silver ; and what thinkest thou my merchant did with them so soon as they had been once used ? ”

“ Most likely, he had them washed clean and set again before the guests,” innocently replied the youth.

“ No such thing. He had them cast into the Tiber, which flows at the back of the house, and replaced them with others which shared the same fate.”

“ Just,” said de Whittingham, “ just as scholars tell us that Cleopatra gave her lover a pearl to drink dissolved in wine. What strange ways great people have of testifying their regard for one another ! ”

“ Yes ; ” responded Tilton musing, “ this muddy river has swallowed up a good many curious things in its time. That little island, for example, is said to have been formed by the cargoes of corn belonging to some king whom the Romans formerly expelled from

their town, and whose corn they threw into the river, in order to testify their abhorrence of monarchy."

Engaged in conversation of this description, they passed on to the Ponte Santa Maria, now known as the Ponte Rotto, and of which only two arches remain standing. Here they crossed the Tiber. Thence their road lay to the left, towards the still populous Campus Martius. On the eastern side, the near Palatine hill was seen bearing up many an extensive and towering, but now crumbled, relic of the state of the olden Cæsars : and was intersected by many a long row of spreading arches through which the western sun threw gay lines of roseate light. But our travellers felt none of the antiquarian interest which now induces modern tourists to inspect the imperial monuments : the degree of knowledge amongst the gentry of their own country was not such as to induce them to veil total indifference under a mask of eager enthusiasm. They, therefore, rode steadily forward, pausing

only to recal some faint images of classical lore as they passed beneath the still venerable capitol. 'Still venerable,' oh Reader ! is our expression ; for as yet, Michael Angelo had not desecrated the hallowed locality by the trumpery gingerbread palaces which, a few years later, occupied the immortal site. *Capitolis immobile saxum* still stood boldly up in pristine grandeur ; its rugged sides had not yet been smoothed down to receive regular flights of steps and spreading terraces, nor levelled to form the gravelled court of a psuedo-grecian palace.

From the base of the then venerable Capitoline hill, our travellers passed onwards till a stunted column, rising above the surrounding soil, and covered with sculptures of beautiful design and masterly execution, ennobled the surrounding square with the name of the Forum of Trajan.

Tilton rode up to a handsome house in the neighbourhood of this open space ; and much was de Whittingham surprised when he learn-

ed that here his friend had formerly taken up those quarters which he now hoped again to occupy. The house exhibited that mixed architecture in which respect for ancient art contended with those plans for defence which the unsettled state of the times rendered necessary. In a rough basement of unhewn stone, surmounted by pilasters of the Ionic order, small windows were indeed left ; but so strongly were these guarded by massive iron bars that the owners of the mansion evidently considered defence and protection from aggressors as essential to comfort as light and air. The whole pile of building had a dirty and desolate appearance, which encreased as the party rode through the strong *portes cochères* ; one of the which doors hung indeed upon its rusty hinges, while the other was dismounted and reclined against the wall of the archway. The inner court was extensive ; but had a cold, damp, and neglected appearance. Over the side on which they had entered, the mansion arose ; and it ex-

tended also in a southern direction on the other side of the court. Opposite, was a pile of stables, with chambers and offices above them. The fourth side of the court was enclosed by the wall of some church or ancient building. From a lion's mouth, projecting from the base of this monument, a stream of purest water fell into an ancient carved sarcophagus, which served the purpose of a reservoir. Beside the fountain, was an open well, to which iron rods extended from different windows of the mansion; and much was de Whittingham astonished to see buckets, apparently self-impelled, slide down these rods on a pulley, descend into the well, and rise again to the window from which they had first glided.

Both the cavaliers dismounted in the courtyard; and although the southern wing of the palace—as Tilton informed his friend it was called—had a separate entrance and staircase from the yard, Maurice, nevertheless, led the way back again to a flight of marble steps

which ascended on the left hand of the archway under which they had entered. This staircase, of handsome width and proportions, was lighted by open arches, of the size of gothic cathedral windows ; but which no glass, nor even stone mullions, protected against the outward air. We may add that the steps were in so littered and filthy a state that Warren would never have presumed them to be of marble, had not his friend positively assured him of the fact. At the top of the first flight they found themselves on a wide landing place, which stretched on to the left. On either side of the gallery thus formed, old busts, engrained with dirt, stood upon pedestals of painted wood. Between them, our adventurers passed on to a wide doorway, whose double doors occupied almost the whole end of the gallery. Here they pulled a rusty iron rod : it produced no sound from a responsive bell.

“I remember,” said Maurice, “that this bell was broken when I was here years ago.

But the door is on the latch, let us, therefore, enter."

They did so, and stood within a square lofty hall, of beautiful proportions. The domed ceiling was painted a fresco, and was lighted up by three immense windows, glazed indeed, but unadorned with hangings of any kind. A small table, bearing an open book and an ink-stand, was the only furniture of this apartment. Not a sound was heard—not a human figure was seen. Desolation seemed to reign triumphant. Maurice, however, wended his way towards a huge screen which stood in one corner of the hall, and partitioned off a small space near one of the mighty windows. He turned round at the end of this screen, and within the contracted enclosure discovered an old man with a large hump on his back, and with large spectacles on his nose, seated at a table covered with party - coloured strips of cloth, old woollen hose, silk doublets, furred collars, and various other pieces of soiled garments ; he was intently bending

over a tarnished crimson short cloak, and, with a pair of clumsy scissors, trimming the rough edges of a seam which he had been stitching.

The two Englishmen gazed in silence. The old man continued his work. At length, he chanced to look up, and, perceiving the intruders, stared firmly at them. He spoke not, moved not; but his prominent large black eyes appeared to grow still wider, larger, and more prominent as he stared.

“So thou dost not remember me, old Andrea?” enquired Maurice at length.

“Not I,” the old man replied, in a querulous tone. “I never remember any one; for all the world knows that nothing is to be had in this poor house by begging; that nothing is ent to him who would borrow; and that the thief might steal all its master owns, and go his way as poor as he came. So, Signor, you will easily conceive that I am never called upon to remember any one, seeing that no one will ever come twice to a house where nothing is to be got.”

After delivering himself of this pithy address, the old man again bent him over his crimson cloak, and took up a greasy collar which he prepared to fit and sew upon it.

“If no one comes to the palace, Andrea,” enquired Tilton, “why does thy master keep the book open on the table for visitors to write their names in?”

“Mere habit — custom ;” said the old man. “Look into it: the last name was written five years ago:—a hungry cousin—never found Don Domenico within—came and wrote his name five times; I told him my master was scarce able to find himself in food and raiment, notwithstanding all my tailoring.” Here he bent anxiously over his work: then added, with a tone evincing an inward chuckle, “the cousin went away in despair: robbed one of the Orsino family, to find wherewith to buy bread: was overtaken by the other people—and hanged. Never came here again!”

Tilton silently took out his well-stuffed purse; and, lifting it high in the air, shook it

over the old servant. At the same time he cried, "Look here! Dost remember me now, thou miserly old rascal?"

"Corpo de Bacco, Signor Maurizio!" exclaimed the old man, rising with alacrity, and coming towards the knight, "I am rejoiced to see your Excellency. Will your Excellency want the south wing of the palace which you fitted up so handsomely when you occupied it before? Ah! those who have money can do great things! How strange that I did not remember your Excellency at once! Will your Excellency see Don Domenico?—he is at dinner in the inner room. He always dines late: poor gentleman, it saves the cost of suppers, which, you know, Milordo, he can ill afford."

"I know, you old rascal," replied Maurice much amused, "that your master is one of the very richest men in Rome. However, conduct me to him."

"Rich!" shrieked Andrea; "Heaven forgive you, heaven forgive you the imputation. But this way, your Excellency, this way."

Opening that which appeared to be a picture, but which, in truth, was a door covered with canvass on which a painting in oils, in good taste and of moderate execution, was tightly stretched, he led the two Englishmen into a smaller room, in which, on chairs covered with faded tapestry, a family group was seated round a large table, which bore an empty dish and a few fragments of bread. Andrea whispered to his master, who came to meet the visitors and politely checked the civilities with which Tilton began to apologise for interrupting them at their meal, by saying "we had finished, Signor Maurizio; we had finished our macaroni; a large dish of macaroni it was: an excellent dish for hungry people; and a cheap one for poor people like us. It is only extravagantly dear when boiled in milk and mixed up with butter and cheese, in which way I understand that some great folks prepare it. Excuse me that I say grace," continued the old gentleman returning to the table: "For all his bountiful provisions to us

may God be praised ! Here, Andrea, put away these crusts of bread carefully : perhaps thou wilt want one or two of them for thy dinner ; put away the rest for our breakfast to-morrow morning.” “ And now, Signori,” he added, turning to the two friends with polished and even elegant manners ; “ permit me to offer you a chair ; and permit me to cover my head as the air is still chill and fire-wood in Rome is too expensive to be burned except for cooking our meals—so” he added, as he cast a worn greasy black cap on his bald head. “ These are my sons and daughters ; very expensive to support so many mouths, and to clothe so many backs ! I think they were all at home when you were last in my poor house.”

De Whittingham could not but look with interest and pity towards the handsome family to whom his attention was thus directed. It consisted of four persons—two brothers and two sisters, whose looks and manner plainly shewed how bitter were the feelings with which they heard their father’s declarations of mean-

ness and pretended poverty. One of the daughters, a young girl of about seventeen years of age, leaned her head upon her hand while large tears silently dropped from her full blue eyes, and broke themselves on the bare table before her. The other, about one twelvemonth older, exhibited a different spirit. Diminutive in person, possessing a slim but rounded figure of exquisite proportions, she tossed her little head with an exhibition of bitter scorn as her father proceeded; and the jet-black falling tresses cast a shade of heightened meaning over her sallow, but pretty, features. Pretty, those features ought not, perhaps, to be called: but no one who met the expressive flash of those dark eyes and marked how the blood, rushing to those pale cheeks, lighted up with passing brilliancy that otherwise dark olive complexion—no one who marked all this and the beautiful bust and rounded arms tipped with hands and fingers of almost infantine proportions, would have hesitated an instant to call *Giulietta Massimi*,

if not a beautiful, yet a most witching, girl. The two brothers appeared to partake the feelings and spirit of their elder sister. One of them turned aside to the window, impatiently humming a popular air : the other, after walking once to the door, returned to the dinner-table, and exclaimed, in answer to the old man's words in which he introduced his children,

“Enough, father ; I will introduce myself to these strangers, should there be occasion for it. Signori,” he said, advancing to the Englishmen, “my father seems to know you ; consequently you know him. I may not say more on the subject than to pray you to believe that neither I nor my brother and sisters would wish to be judged of from public or private report, or what are supposed to be family characteristics. We beg to stand or fall on our own actions and sentiments.”

“I am sure,” replied de Whittingham, pitying the evident shame and mortification to which this fine-spirited family was exposed by

their father's miserly meanness—"I am sure," he replied, as he grasped, and, with friendly frankness, shook the young man's hand, "that you will ever rise in the opinion of whoever may have the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you."

Warren de Whittingham and the children of old Massimi were friends from that hour.

The Reader may remark that, although we have given some description of the younger members of the family group, to whom we have introduced him, we have not said one word descriptive of the father. In truth, gentle Reader, the old man was the very image of his old servant Andrea; or, perhaps, Andrea was the image of his master; just as thou mayest have observed that dogs generally acquire all the characteristics of their different owners. Didst ever see a short, porsy man whose dog was not porsy, short-legged, stump-tailed, and endowed with a wheezing affection in the throat? Didst ever see a dashing, devil-me-care fire-eater whose pet dog,

if he endured one, was not either a setter, an Italian shepherd dog, or a descendant of Newfoundland? So was Andrea the exact image of Don Domenico ; and, having described the one, we have exhibited the person, though not the really gentlemanly and polished manners, of the other.

“And now,” said the old gentleman to Tilton, “now you will want your wing of the palace again? It is just as you left it. But this new Pope draws to Rome so many of the strangers, who went away from the dullness of his predecessor Adrian, that you must pay me more. People expect that Rome will be as brilliant as it was under Leo Decimo ; besides, I have been at great expense in keeping the apartments aired.”

“For your own profit, Signor Domenico. Well, I can easily get quarters elsewhere. Good afternoon to you. My horses and followers are in the yard below.”

And he walked towards the door.

“Signor Cavelliere! Milordo!” shrieked the

old man, at the top of his cracked voice, "the apartment is yours. Do not suppose I would disoblige an old friend for the sake of a few hundred ducats, although they are very scarce, and would be a great help. Andrea shall go and open the doors for you."

"Be it so then," replied Tilton. "Excuse us now," he added to the young people. "Our men and horses are tired. I look forward to much pleasure to be derived from our future intercourse."

And, indeed, if this were the case with Maurice, it was evidently so with those whom he addressed. Their eyes sparkled, and they arose with unwonted buoyancy of feeling, at the anticipation that their monotonous imprisonment with their father was to be broken by two lively, handsome, and stylish young men.

On descending to the court-yard, the Englishmen found that Raffaello Monza had, with the prudence and license of an old

trooper, already taken possession of the extensive stables, and broken open a bin in which a few bushels of corn had been carefully locked away. Hearing that his master had engaged to occupy the palace, he now quickly despatched his troopers to provide provender of every description for horse and man ; for he justly calculated, from the external appearance of the house, that little entertainment, according to the modern phrase, would be found in it for either.

Maurice Tilton introduced his friend into his old quarters. The apartments were handsome, commodious, and roomy ; and looked all the better that he had, at his former visit, thoroughly repaired, cleaned, and burnished them up. In the course of the evening, Raffaello had provided all that was needful ; and after a cheerful supper and a good many glasses of Orvietan wine, poured from rush-covered flasks, de Whittingham retired to bed, and dreamed all night that he was alternately

engaged in single combat with Francis the first of France, with the Emperor of Germany, and with the Grand Sultan Soleyman ; while the Pope stood by giving his benediction, and Vittoria Colonna weaved garlands of flowers with which to encircle his victorious brows.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PAPAL COURT.

“ But see each Muse in Leo’s golden days
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither’d bays.
Rome’s ancient genius, o’er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust and rears its reverend head.
Then Sculpture and her sister arts revive,
Stones leap’d to form, and rocks began to live :
With sweeter notes each rising temple rung ;
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.
Immortal Vida ! on whose honour’d brow
The poet’s bays and critic’s ivy grow :
Cremona, now, shall ever boast thy name
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame.”

POPE’S ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

THUS beautifully writes our most classical and most chaste of English poets : we must, however, be permitted to contradict one or two of his implied assertions. The “golden

days," which are here restricted to the reign of Leo the tenth, had, we opine, risen upon Rome forty years before, when Sixtus the fourth founded the Vatican library; they had beamed with noon-day lustre under the pontificate of Julius; nor were they overcast until the miserable event which impends over this our history. We must also, secondly, be allowed to challenge Pope's estimate of literary immortality and of that which secures it. Vida stands forth, indeed, as one of the first, if not the very first, of Latin poets of this second Augustan age: but the Italian language which had been first ennobled by Petrarch, was then formed; and by it alone was popular immortality to be obtained by modern writers. So felt Ariosto, while apostrophising a writer of the same age and vastly inferior to Vida:

" la veggio Pietro,

Bembo, ch' il puro e dolce idioma nostro,

Levato fuor del volgar uso tetro,

Quale esser dee, ci ha col suo essemio mostro."

In one of the smaller and constantly inhabited rooms of the Vatican palace, Pope Clement was seated on a straight-backed, but well-stuffed, elbowed chair covered with scarlet velvet. Beside him were his two friends and counsellors, Schomberg, the Archbishop of Capua, and Gianmatteo Giberto, the Bishop of Verona. Near them, and joining freely in the conversation, to which all contributed, stood the two most eminent apostolic secretaries, Jacopo Sadoleti and Pietro Bembo. For many years had these talented men been united with Clement and the rest of the group in the conduct of the most important public affairs, and had, nevertheless, found time to make for themselves a high and widely-spreading reputation by those poems and varied compositions which still endure. Other eminent persons swelled the assembly, whom we may or may not individually introduce to the Reader.

“I cannot reconcile myself,” observed Monsignor Sadoleti, at the moment when we cast

our eyes on the interesting group, and marked a middle-aged man cloathed in a prelate's purple robe, whose fine, thoughtful, serious cast of features betrayed a religious, contemplative, and mild disposition — "I cannot reconcile myself to Cardinal Grimani's bequest. It was very patriotic and very proper for him to leave his library to the canons of Saint Salvador at Venice ; but I must grudge the loss of his eight thousand volumes to Rome."

"Mind then, Sadoleti," said the Pope, jocosely, "mind that we shall remember your opinions, and expect that you will never remove your own library from home. No ; not even to your bishoprick of Carpentras : ill luck betide them if you attempt it !" *

"With every respect for your Holiness," replied Sadoleti, "I do not fear your powers of prophecy."

* Some years later this excellent library was sent by its owner on board a coasting vessel to Marseilles ; but when arrived in port, it was discovered that some of the passengers were infected by the plague. The books were, therefore, not allowed to be landed ; and the vessel, having set sail again, was never heard of more.

“However,” interposed Cardinal Scipando, an old man who stood with conscious importance in the group, “there will soon be no lack of books to form as many libraries as there are readers. And it is my proud duty to present to your Holiness a poem which the author trusts may endure, and do honour to his country.”

“What author was ever deficient in a similar confidence!” exclaimed the Pope. “But let us see the book. Who is it by, and what is it called?”

“It is Sanazzaro’s poem *de partu Virginis*,” replied the Cardinal: “a poem which he has been working at for twenty years, and which he now prays to be permitted to inscribe to your Holiness.”

“Let us see the inscription,” said the Pope. “These lines,” he added, after looking at them, “were, most assuredly, written for Leo, and have now been turned to us for want of a better patron. And we must, in sooth, pa-

tronise the author. Write to him, Sadoleti, our deep gratitude for having associated our name with a work whose tendency must be so pious and whose fame so extensive and enduring; and tell him if he will come to Rome we shall be delighted to receive him. Yet," continued Clement, "the Incarnation of our Lord is a curious subject on which to write a long poem; and we can scarcely approve of dilating, for three books, on a mystery revealed for our belief, indeed, but so awful and incomprehensible that we see not how it can be treated by a poet with delicacy, decorum, and respect. And thou, Girolamo Vida," added the pontiff, addressing himself to another of his secretaries who was seated writing at a table placed at one side of the room, "how dost thou get on with the *Christiad*?"

Deep grief was seated on the fine features of the young man whom Clement thus addressed. He rose from his desk, and replied with all humility and courtesy, but yet in a

tone to shew that his heart and thoughts were not in the scene before him, and that he attached, for the moment, but little consequence to the subject to which he referred. "The Christiad, most holy father, has advanced, I trust, auspiciously. How could it fail to do so, suggested, as it was, by the late pontiff, Leo, and supported and encouraged, as the author is, by your Holiness?"

He placed a handkerchief to his eyes, and, hastily retreating to his desk, buried his face in his hands.

"What occasions his distress?" kindly enquired Clement. "Has aught untoward occurred?"

"My dear young friend," replied Giberto, "has but lately heard of the death of his father and mother, who expired within a few hours of one another. He told me of his loss yesterday, and I have recommended him to occupy his mind as much as possible on public business and in composition. Here

are some lines which he shewed me this morning and which are touching.”

Although this was said in an under tone, the sensibilities of the mourner enabled him to catch its purport ; and he quickly rose and quitted the apartment.

“ Poor young man ! ” exclaimed the Pope, using a term of endearment which the age of Marco Girolamo Vida, who was then in his thirty-fourth year, scarcely warranted. “ Poor young man ! He possesses a fine and noble mind ; and, I doubt not, will write a poem which shall contain nothing indecorous or contrary to the exalted purity of the Christian dispensation. Let us hear the verses, Gianmatteo.”

“ They are these,” replied the favourite counsellor. “ You must know, holy father, that he had not written to his parents for some time — anticipating the pleasure he would give and receive from an unexpected visit.”

He then read some Latin lines, of which the following is a translation.

How oft I dream'd—dream'd o'er and o'er again,
Of home, of joys, of you—nor dream'd of pain!
Still did fond fancy picture forth the day—
That day of bliss, when I might speed away
And claim your fond embrace :—then, one by one,
Tell the proud honours I had proudly won,
While, dreaming still of you, I strove at Rome,
And felt Cremona's cottage was my home.

Not until the Pope had given silently a sign of sympathy and approbation did Bembo exclaim, "What a pity it is that people should still persist in writing in a dead language, now that our native Italian has been reduced into order, and proved to be so very rich, soft and energetic!"

"Rich and soft, an ye will, but energetic no," said Clement. "Why, thou knowest, Pietro Bembo, that thou hast only taken to writing in Italian because Sanazzaro and Vida are so successful in Latin. However, we wish that both thou and Sanazzaro would be somewhat more christian and less hea-

thenish in your compositions. Thou thyself hast written that we were elected to the chair of Saint Peter by the favour of the immortal gods: this is not to our taste, any more than are all these Pagan deities who, we see, preside, in Sanazzaro's poem, at the Incarnation of the Saviour."

"I bow with all gratitude and humility," Pietro Bembo replied; "but, if I may be permitted to say so, we fail in the subjects of our compositions no less than in the compositions themselves. I know not whether your Holiness may permit my opinion: still, I cannot but consider the poem of my friend Girolamo Fracastoro superior in classical elegance, propriety of diction, and selection and management of subject, to that of any writer since the old Augustan age, which your Holiness has brought back to Italy."*

"He is, indeed, an eminent man," Clement replied; "and heathen that thou art, thou

* The title of Fracastoro's great poem is — "Sive de Morbo Gallico."

wilt, doubtless, say that Apollo marked him for his own, when, his mother being struck dead by lightning, he, a child in her arms, received not the least hurt."

"Esculapius has no less a claim on my friend Fracastoro," interposed Giberto ; "since a surgical operation was necessary to open his lips that were closed at the time of his birth."

"Basta !" said Clement, cheerfully, "you have both accounted, in very Christian style, for his being as eminent a poet as he is a skilful physician. But now, Pietro Bembo," he continued, "tell us that thou art about to return to Rome. You truly say that we wish to encourage literature: as one great step towards that end, let us hope you will again illustrate Rome by making it your residence."

"Would that my health...." began Bembo in apologetic tone.

"Say, rather," interrupted Clement, "would that thy amica, thy mistress. Aye ; we have

heard of thy domestic circle, and of thy constancy to the Morosina, which some think so praise-worthy. But we wish, for thine own sake, as well as for the cause of religion and public decorum, that such scandals could be arrested. None might rise higher than Pietro Bembo: and depend upon it that the time approaches when the strong hand of authority, backed by outraged public opinion, will ruthlessly enforce the ancient and wholesome discipline of the church. Attribute to our old friendship," continued the Pontiff, "and to our wishes for thy welfare that we speak openly in this manner."

Bembo replied with humility to the censure of the Pontiff; and eagerly attempted to deny the well known immorality which subsequently again interfered with his promotion under Paul the third. He then prayed to be permitted to recommend to his Holiness a poor author, whom the liberality of Leo had encouraged beyond his deserts—Antonio Tebaldeo—but who was now reduced to great distress.

“We will see what can be done,” kindly replied the Pope: “but we must not allow all these verse-makers to suppose that the profusion of Leo is again to be expected. Why, according to the *Coryciana*, which Palle, or as he pleases to call himself, Blossius Palladius, has just published, there are no less than one hundred and twenty makers of respectable Latin verses now living in Rome. We cannot support them all. We have not yet organised our new financial system which, by God’s blessing, will enable us to avoid some of those expedients for raising money which our predecessors have resorted to. How much money, think you,” he said, turning to the group, “was expended on the mock coronation of the buffoon and arch-poet Querno, which the sculpture on that door perpetuates? No; we must take a lesson from that carved elephant, who, you all see, is much too sagacious to minister any longer to the silly rhymster, and is endeavouring to cast him from his back over the bridge of Sant Angelo. Of such as him

and Bernardo Accolti — though we suppose that we ought to call him the divine Unico Aretino—posterity will think much the same as did our poor predecessor Adrian who complained so bitterly of their voracious appetites.”

A young man poorly drest, but in the garb which then characterised the important and honoured brotherhood of painters, was now introduced by Giulio Romano, whom we have before brought before the reader.

“Giulio,” enquired the Pontiff, “have you shown him poor Raffaello’s transfiguration?”

“I have, holy father.”

“And what did he say to it?”

The young stranger here signed timidly to his patron, as if requesting him not to betray him: the other, however, remarked him not.

“He gazed at it, most reverend father,” he replied, “long and silently. At length, he opened his lips, but not to praise the painting.”

“No!” exclaimed Clement. “What said he then?”

“He cried out earnestly and enthusiastically *Ed io anche sono pittore!*—then I too am a painter!”

The Pope mused awhile, and then said to the stranger “What is your name, young man?”

“Antonio da Correggio, most holy father,” replied the poor painter, timidly and devoutly dropping on one knee.

“Well, well,” replied the Pontiff: “we will see what thou canst do. But we think better of thy exclamation than does Signor Giulio. Thou hast paid a higher compliment to that picture of Raffaello’s than it ever received before. By the bye, gentlemen,” he added, “you are all fond of the fine arts—all at least except Schomberg, who says he is no judge of paintings:—you will, therefore, be glad to hear that we have changed our intention of sending that picture to the cathedral of Narbonne, for which we had it painted originally.

We now purpose placing it in the church of San Pietro in Montorio; so that we may retain it at home."

All present, but particularly Giberto, who was ever foremost in his admiration of the fine arts and literature, of which he was a munificent patron, expressed their satisfaction at this intelligence. But as Giulio Romano and his young protégé left the presence, Schomberg addressed himself to Clement, and insinuating that much time had been spent in idle talk on idle subjects, asked permission to introduce the English Knight who had brought the first news of the battles of the Sessia.

"No, Fra Nicolo," replied the Pontiff, "we will not see him. Did he come to Rome in the character of a regular and avowed envoy from the king of England, we would show all courtesy to the ambassador of so faithful a son of the church: but he is here, if we understand aright, as the friend of the Cardinal of York and his Sovereign, but without any de-

clared character. It would not be advisable to commit ourselves by treating on public matters with such an agent. We would see him with pleasure in his private capacity, and let him bring his friend with him—our officer of the Black Bands that is to be: for we think you have deferred his commission, Monsignor Giberto?”

“Only that the fine lad may enjoy himself awhile in Rome,” answered the minister. “He will be ever within our call, I will answer for him, and grateful for any opportunity of serving your Holiness and of distinguishing himself.”

“But, most holy father,” Schomberg insisted, “the other Knight, Sir Maurice Tilton, has shewn me most valid reasons why your Holiness should not utterly discountenance the Imperial interests.”

“We discountenance no one,” exclaimed the Pope. “As we replied, after our coronation, to the emperor’s ambassadors, we are now the common father of all, and can no longer fa-

your particular interests. All we strive for is universal peace amongst Christian princes. Say you not so, Monsignor Giberto?" Clement added, addressing his Italian counsellor with that sort of feverish anxiety for the support of another's opinion, which indicated that he felt uncertain of his own resolutions.

Giberto strenuously supported the policy declared by his sovereign; and some little sparring, as courteous and insidious as was required by the presence they were in, ensued between the two favourite ministers. Although at his first election, Clement had indeed so far acted up to the treaty formed by his predecessor with the emperor as to subsidise his armies to the stipulated amount; yet he had declared, at the time, his purpose of perfect neutrality for the future, and had ever since laboured to establish either a long truce or a permanent peace amongst the contending sovereigns of Spain, France, and England. All his apostolic efforts were, however, rendered unavailing by the conflicting interests of the

different parties. Francis was, indeed, willing to assent to a truce, that it might afford him time to organise his resources for the further prosecution of his designs; to guard against these, the Emperor would agree to nothing but a lasting peace; while Henry of England, or more properly Wolsey, whom Clement had invested with a legantine commission and extraordinary ecclesiastical powers over the whole kingdom, as some compensation for the disappointment he had endured in not being elected to the papal throne at the last vacancy—Henry and Wolsey opposed any treaty between the belligerents which should be instigated by Rome, as they wished to constitute themselves the grand referees and mediators for all parties. With great difficulty Clement adhered to his first resolution — occasionally vacillating between the contending opinions of his councillors, and the angry reclamations of the Imperial envoys, who demanded, rather than prayed for, his active support; but still recurring to his determination, and still secretly

constant to the wish of every native Italian, that neither French nor German should obtain preponderating influence within the Alps.

The conversation, perhaps we might say, the discussion, on these matters, still continued in the papal council chamber, or, at least, amongst the papal counsellors, as they were not now formally drawn together on any particular matter of business, when a chamberlain entered to state that the Signor Jacopo, the Pope's principal musician, requested to be admitted to his Holiness. Clement, delighted to interrupt the controversy amongst those to whom he could not listen, without being successively swayed by each, and thus increasing that nervous hesitation which he now felt was growing upon him — Clement gladly ordered that the applicant should advance.

“So, Signor Jacopo,” he exclaimed, as an old musician entered the room, “art thou come to tell us that thou hast engaged that young flute-player for our service?”

“With some difficulty I have succeeded in

doing so, most holy father: he is a goldsmith by trade, and made me await his determination for some days, so fearful was he of injuring his business by taking up this new pursuit."

"Truly," said Clement, "if he set so much store upon his trade, he ought to be a good workman. However, set down his name as one of our band: we never heard a more skilful player upon the flute; and tell him that, if he be equally clever as a goldsmith, we will find him occupation in that business also. As he is a Florentine, we would willingly patronise a countryman. Cellini is his name, is it not?"

"Benvenuto Cellini, most holy father. A wild youth; but son to old Cellini, the engineer and organ-maker of Florence."

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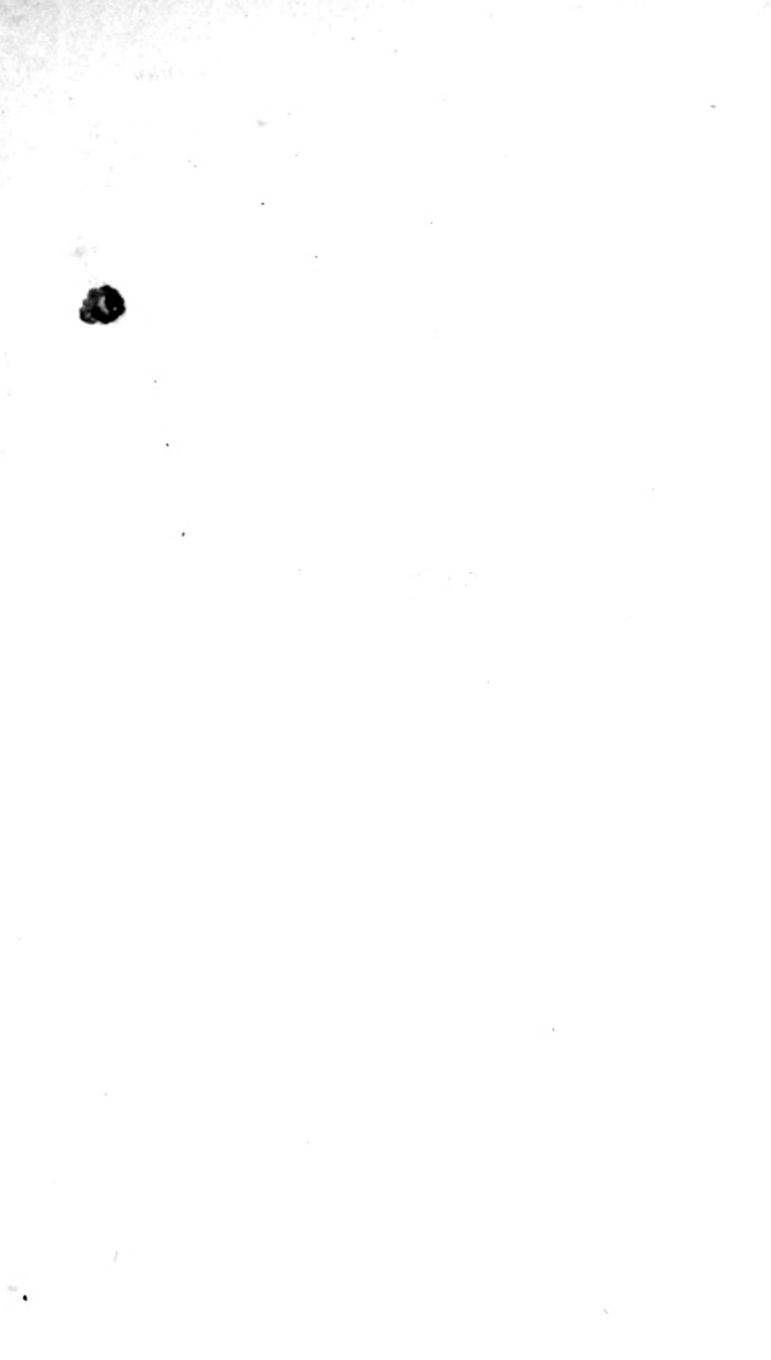
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